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CUS KING MORMON

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MARCUS KING, MORMON

By NEPHI ANDERSON,
Author of "Added Upon," "The Castle Builder," Etc.

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Salt Lake City, Utah
THE DESERET NEWS,
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MARCUS KING, MORMON.

CHAPTER 1.

Joy and sorrow, hope and fear, mingled their conflicting emotions in the breast of the Reverend Marcus King. He had sat by his writing table all the afternoon; yet not even the outlines of his Sunday sermon were drawn. The sun went down, and the pink in the western sky turned to a fiery red, which streamed in at the large, open window and flooded the room with its warm color. The pale, nearly haggard face of the young man sitting with his chair turned to the light, was bathed in the soft glow.

Marcus King had reached a turning in his journey of life. That journey had been, up to the present, one of ease, having led him by gentle curves and grades into pleasant places. But now the end of it seemed near; whichever way he turned, a difficulty of some kind faced him.

It had come about in this way: One day, as Mr. King was sitting in his study looking up matter for a sermon, he admitted a man who was canvassing the town with religious tracts and books. Mr. King made it a rule to entertain all such who came to him. "If they have a

truth to give me," said he, "why God be praised for that; and if they have not, there is no harm done."

The man who called on him that day was a rare "find," as he proved to be a Mormon,—a real, live Mormon such as he had read about, a Mormon missionary come prepared with tracts and books to present his doctrine to all who would listen. The missionary found Mr. King a wonderful exception to the usual minister of the Gospel. This minister had listened attentively to his message, had asked numerous questions, and at last had invited the "Mormon" to call again. This was the beginning. Many and long were the talks these two men had after that, until it was well known by the people of Hungerton that the Reverend Marcus King had the conversion of a Mormon missionary in charge. Little did they dream of the true state of things. Little did they think that it was the minister that had been brought face to face with a great truth,—one that he could not reason away, try as he would; a mighty truth that stood before him at all times, close his eyes as he would; a truth that he could not simply accept and engraft into his own religion; but a truth so far-reaching and powerful that it seemed to overturn his own and strip him of every vestige of divine authority as a servant of God and a minister of his word. In short, that is the reason why joy and sorrow, hope and fear mingled in conflicting chaos in his breast that afternoon, when his work was neglected, and tomorrow was the Sabbath. Joy was there because he had found a great truth; sorrow, because of his overturned idols; hope, for his soul's future salvation; fear, because of the opinions of those who were dear to him, and whose lives were intimately connected with his own.

The brightness faded out of the sky, but how deep and unfathomable was the blue that came in its place behind the elms in the garden! The cool evening breeze swept through the window, and Marcus leaned back in his chair to enjoy it. An open book lay on the window sill, and at the sound of approaching footsteps, he hurriedly closed it and placed it in a drawer; but no one came in, and he leaned his head again on the cushions of his chair and gazed out at the sky.

He had been a minister of the Gospel scarcely a year, a short year it now seemed to him, filled with many varied and pleasant experiences. First, four years at college. Ah, those were happy years! Then the final preparation for the ministry which his father so fondly hoped he would follow. It was the one wish of his that his son should take his place as pastor over the flock at Hungerton, and now at the early age of twenty-five he had occupied his father's place for nearly a year. The chair he sat in had belonged to his father, the writing table had been his father's work bench for nearly twenty years. The fine library, covering nearly two walls of the room, was his father's cellecting; and there above him on the wall hung his portrait, looking down upon him with a smile. What would he say, what would he think of his son, could he know the thoughts that coursed sometimes like fiery steeds through his brain? What would the young man give to be able to talk to his father about these matters, to get counsel from him!

After all, the religion that was good enough for his father ought to be good enough for him. What had saved his father ought certainly to save him. But then, but then, that was not the point. Would his father not

have accepted this truth had he been given the chance? Should not truth be accepted anyhow, no matter when, or where, or from whom it came? In former days the condemnation was that light had come into the world, and men would not receive it. Was it not the same today, yes, in all ages of the world?

It was at this point of his reflections that Marcus King's most inner conscience brought to his understanding the fact that he had received an answer to his prayers. Much of the theology he had learned at college and that which he was supposed to teach, was dim and of doubtful meaning. He had always wished to understand some of those dogmas which he could not unreservedly accept. He saw now that doubt, peace destroying doubt, had been creeping silently into his soul, and to be perfectly honest with himself, he could now no longer close his eyes to the fact. This new light had thrown its searching rays into recesses of his soul that hitherto had been unseen, and he could deceive himself no longer as to his true standing. He had been asking for light, and God had sent it to him. Now he must not reject it.

Marcus must have fallen asleep in the quiet twilight, for the tired brain ceased its work, and when he regained consciousness, he heard the soft music of the piano in the adjoining room. The door was open and the strains floated in to him.

The melody was a familiar one, and he knew by it whose fingers so lightly touched the keys. Presently the music ceased, and there appeared in the open doorway the figure of a young woman. She was dressed in white, and held a bunch of great red roses in her hand.

"Am I trespassing?" she asked.

"What a question, Alice! Come in."

She entered the room and took a seat by the window. He drew his chair up close to her, pinched her chin, and then kissed her.

"Your cheeks are full of roses, tonight," said he.

"Oh, I'm always out in the garden since the roses came. Environment, you know."

"It is getting dark. I must have had a nap just before you came."

"Shall I light the lamp?"

"No, don't. Can there be anything more beautiful than this?"

They moved their chairs closer to the window. There was still a faint blush in the west, and here and there through the trees twinkled the first stars of the night. Neither was very talkative, and they sat for some time looking at the sky.

"Alice," said he—they were close together! and he did not need to speak loudly—"you're a pretty good critic. What do you think of this little—well, parable, I call it? I thought of using it in illustrating a point tomorrow."

"Tell it to me," she said. "Go on, I am listening."

"A certain man had a beautiful pleasure boat, which he launched on the placid waters of a small lake," began Marcus. "With him in this boat he took all his relatives and a great many of his friends. They had with them also everything in the way of convenience and comfort. and life with them was very pleasant indeed; for, strange to say, all this little company thought that the little lake

on which they sailed back and forth was the only water in the world.

"But one day a man came to the master of the vessel and told him that he and all his company were deceived, and that the lake they were on was but a very small part of the water of the earth; that at considerable distance from them was the mighty ocean, teeming with wonders, whose boundless shores were lined with peoples and cities never heard of by them. This stranger took the master and showed him a narrow passage which led out of the lake; as the master looked he saw that it was filled with rocks, and that at places the current was strong and dangerous. The stranger also examined the vessel, pointing out many weak places in it, and advised the master that if he ever contemplated leaving the mill-pond, as he called it, he should get a stronger vessel in which to make the journey.

"Now all this had its effect on the master. He saw the littleness of his and his friends' outlook, and he longed for the greater knowledge of the vast ocean. But there were the waves and the rocks and the narrow channel. He doubted very much whether his friends would believe in the stranger's words to the extent of following them. The lake was small, but it was always still, and even if the vessel was deficient in parts, outwardly it looked secure, and would, no doubt, carry them as long as was necessary.

"And so the master pondered much on the matter, until—well, until his lady love came to him and he propounded the question to her of what he should do."

"And further, until his mother came and called him

to dinner," said Alice, as she saw Mrs. King appearing in the doorway with a lamp in her hand.

"Excuse me, folks, but dinner is ready," said Mrs. King.

"Yes, mother, we're coming. Let me close the window, Alice; I feel chilly."

"Marcus," said the mother at the table, "you are studying too hard of late. You look quite haggard to-night. Don't you think so, Alice?"

"I cartainly do. He acts so strangely, too."

"Oh, now, don't you folks worry about me. My vacation next month will bring me around again, won't it, Alice?" But Alice said nothing. He had reference to the little journey which they were to take after their marriage.

After they had arisen from the table, Alice explained to Marcus that she had been sent to get him to visit one of his congregation who was in trouble.

"Yes," said he, "we'll go together. Alice Merton, you ought to be the shepherd of this flock instead of me. Come, put on your wraps."

The streets of Hungerton were full of people enjoying the beautiful evening. The gas lamps flickered dimly in the bright moonlight.

"What do you think of my parable?" he asked.

"I don't understand it," she answered.

"No, it is not a good one. There are better in St. Matthew, especially the one about the merchant finding a pearl of great price, and selling all he had that he might buy it. But whom are we going to see, Alice?"

"Henry Sandford. He's now in jail."

"What? What's poor Henry done now?"

"He has been raving again, and last night he tried to kill the whole family, himself included. It's a pitiable case, and some thought you ought to talk with him. You might do him some good."

"Poor man!" was all Marcus said.

The jailor met them on the courthouse steps, and knowing their errand, he immediately led the way with his lantern. Into the basement and along a corridor they went to where the man was confined. The jailor unlocked the door, and they all went in. By the light of the lantern they saw a man sitting on a bed in the corner of the cell. His hands were fettered. He raised his head as they entered. He was a well-dressed, seemingly intelligent man of about fifty.

"Good evening, Henry," said the minister, advancing to him.

"Good evening, Mr. King," was the calm reply. "If the good jailor will take these pieces of iron from my wrists I will shake hands with you."

Marcus looked inquiringly at the jailor, who shook his head and said: "Couldn't do it, sir. He's all right now, no doubt, but there's no telling when he might become wild again."

The jailor found a seat for Alice, set the lantern on a table, and then left, saying that he would be close at hand in case he was needed. Marcus sat down on the bedside.

"My poor friend Henry, so you are in trouble again," said the minister. "Can I do anything for you? What seems to be the difficulty this time?"

"Mr. King," said the man, "I'm pleased to see you; but it's too bad that you and Miss Merton should have to

visit such a place as this—there, I know you will say that it is all right, but it isn't for all that. You've no business here, I've no business here. You ought to be whirling in the pleasures of life, and I ought to be dead. This cell is too good for me. The grave is my place, and hell is my home, my natural home, sir. In the eternal fitness of things I was meant to dwell there. The great God who created me, who made the universe out of nothing, sir, has a right to say where I belong. Hell is my natural abode, and Satan is my master; and it's all for the pleasure of God and the manifestation of His glory."

The two shuddered at his words.

"My dear friend, you are mistaken," said Marcus. "God is not such a being as you imagine. 'God is love.' Think of what that means. He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

"Repentance, did you say? What does that mean to me? To you and your fair lady it may mean something, but to me it has no significance. Listen, sir, listen: 'By the decree of God, for the manifestation of His glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others fore-ordained to everlasting death.' I am one of the latter."

"No, friend, you are not."

"I tell you I am. How do you know I am not? How can anyone know but one's self? I tell you I am one of the damned, and I can't help myself. And I'll tell you another thing, friend King, and you can preach it tomorrow: This heritage of mine I have transmitted to my children. They are also heirs of damnation and non-elect children; and should they live and beget children, this heritage will also go to them. But I'll stop it all, sir; I'll

put an end to it. I and mine shall perish off the face of the earth,and we'll see whether the number of the damned can neither be increased nor diminished!"

"Let us go, Marcus," said Alice, "I can stand it no longer."

"He is raving mad. We can do no good. I am too late, too late!" and there was a tremble in Marcus' voice as he said it.

From the jail they went to the unfortunate man's family. The wife was in the greatest distress. She told them how her husband had brooded for a long time on religious questions, and how at last he had used violence against them. "Last night was the worst," she said. "When he came home from work, he would have no supper, but sat glaring like a madman at us all. Suddenly, he sprang to his feet, grasped the bread knife, and shouted, 'I'll begin with the youngest!' and made a dash for the baby. In the tumult which followed, the neighbors came in, and he was prevented from doing any serious harm; but it was all so awful!"

Marcus could say but little, either to the distracted mother or to Alice as they walked home that night. The only remark about Henry Sanford was, that he had found a rotten plank in the imaginative pleasure boat, and not knowing how to avert the expected disaster, it had turned his mind; but Alice failed to get the meaning of the figure, as she had that of the parable.

The night following the visit to the jail was passed restlessly by Marcus King. He was up with the first gray light in the east, and out in the woods above the town of Hungerton. He loved the freedom and quiet of the forest, besides it was better than to muse in the

close library at home. It would not do to undermine his health. With loss of bodily strength might come weakness of spiritual power, and he might be called upon any day now to exercise that to its ntmost capacity. The inevitable was before him. He was sure of that. He would have to resign his pastorate, and that at no distant day; but if he would have the power to sell all he had for the pearl he had found, why, that was a thing God only knew.

The birds know the value of the morning. Then they are always out in full force, and that morning they greeted the early visitor with a wild chorus of melody; and Marcus envied the happy little hearts, so free from care and responsibility. Seated at last on a mossy rock, Marcus watched the sun come up. Was his own sun rising or setting? Then he thought of his friend Henry Sanford, confined in a dismal cell, his limbs bound with fetters; worst of all, he was deprived of that most precious of gifts, his reason. What had brought him to such a state? Reasoning on religion, his own religion, the religion which he had been expounding to his congregation Sabbath after Sabbath. The demented man had repeated one of the articles of the Westminster Confession, which was their articles of faith and rule of practice. Some men were predestined to everlasting life, and others to everlasting death, "and their number is so certain and definite that it cannot be either increased or diminished." If that be true, why preach any longer? Of what use were efforts to bring souls unto Christ? The whole number one way or the other had been irrevocably fixed. It was the height of folly for him or any other preacher to try to overturn the unalterable decree of the

Almighty. There was much reason in Henry Sanford's unreasonable mind.

It was an abominable doctrine, and who could tell what misery and pain of spirit it had brought to the human race! Henry Sanford was an example, and was not he, Marcus King the preacher, answerable in part for his condition?

Marcus climbed further up the hill, and from a clearing in the forest he saw the town at his feet. It was a beautiful place, and not the least fair was his own home and the church wherein he was to preach that very day. The vines had climbed up over the windows, protecting them from the hot summer sun. The flower beds in the lawn at the side of the church showed the skill of the gardener in the diamonds and circles and crosses. The broad, slow-flowing river half encircled the town and then disappeared behind the green hills.

And here he was, the Reverend Marcus King, thinking seriously of forsaking all this and becoming a Mormon. Think of it, a Mormon! One of a despised, hated and ridiculed sect. Was it worth it? And there was Alice, Alice who loved him, and whom he loved. But she was a good, pure, sensible girl. He would explain it all to her, and she would not forsake him. They were to be married next month. With her as his wife, the passage through the rocky channel could be borne. If all others forsook him, surely she would not. Thus he reasoned until the church bells rang up from below and called him back to the present. Once more he would preach. One Sabbath more he would parform his accustomed duty, and that would be the end. So he walked home with that purpose fixed.

CHAPTER 2.

The Mormon missionary, Elder James, continued to be a frequent visitor at the home of the Reverend Marcus King. An intimate friendship had grown up between them, and they already treated each other as brothers. Elder James was a plain, simple man, a little older than Marcus, not learned in the schools, but thoroughly conversant with the scriptures. His language was often faulty, when measured by the rules of grammar. His coat was not strictly of the ministerial cut; and altogether his manner was awkward and smattered considerably of the backwoods.

One evening during the week following the Sunday last mentioned, Elder James was at the clergyman's residence. They had been considering some Gospel subjects, and the missionary had been relating some of his experiences on the wild plains of the West.

"Mr. King," said the Elder, "you may wonder why such an uneducated, unpolished man as I should be sent out to preach the Gospel; but the truth is that we all go as the call finds us, both the learned and the unlearned—I mean in regard to worldly wisdom. As for me, I have had very little chance for schooling. You know some of our history in Ohio, Missouri, and Illinois. I, with my parents, have been through it all, and you can understand what chances I could have amid continuous mobbings and drivings and confusion; and then, the last few years have been spent in the heart of the great American desert, trying to force bread from a barren waste. My face is yet tanned from exposure, and my hands have not yet lost

their callousness. But for all that, my friend, we have the pure Gospel of Jesus Christ, and what is more, divine authority to teach it."

"I say amen to that," replied Marcus. He went to the table, and picking up a small volume, opened it and said: "Would you like to know what I had to do to become a minister? what all who preach in our church must do, before they can become ministers? Well, here it is, stated plainly in our rules of discipline. First, we must be graduates of some college; second, take a two years' course in divinity; then pass a critical examination; and at last be taken for a time on trial; and all this, because as it here reads, 'It is highly reproachful to religion, and dangerous to the church to entrust the ministry to weak and ignorant man.' What do you think of that?"

"I think that 'God hath chosen the foolish things of the earth to confound the wise,' even as he did in days of old when he called simple fishermen directly from their nets to be ministers of the Gospel. Mind you, I do not depreciate an education. A scholarly man, if he would let God use him, would certainly be a shining shaft in God's hand; but it has been the experience of all time that the Almighty has worked with the weak things of the world. They are more pliable in his hand. Not that the servants of the Lord will always remain weak, though they must remain humble.

"To change the subject," said Marcus, "how would you like to preach in the church next Sunday?"

"I would like nothing better, providing it is with everybody's consent."

"Well, I don't know about that. I would have to take the responsibility. I am going to resign. I can't

stand this double dealing any longer; but I would like to hear you explain your principles in your simple way to my congregation, preach a sermon like the one you gave at the school house in Willow the other evening. How would it do, if, after I make my explanations and reasons for my action, I call upon you to explain the first principles?"

"No; it would be taking undue advantage of the people. We have had meetings here in your town, we have distributed tracts to every house that would receive one. We have given them every opportunity. Your plan would only bring on opposition."

"Yes; I can see it. I had, friend James, made up my mind to preach no more, but I must give my reasons for resigning, and I'm going to do it next Sunday."

"You have considered well the step you are taking? You know the consequences?"

"Yes, to both your questions. I have been three months now thinking about it. I am going to test your promise. 'For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?' As for the consequence, I know my act will make a sensation, but I cannot help that. I must follow the light as God reveals it to me. God must help me in the result. Brother, pray for me that I may have strength to go through the ordeal."

Could Marcus King have taken two others with him, he would cheerfully have faced the world. One of these was his mother and the other was Alice Merton. He had carefully introduced the new doctrines to them both, placing tracts and books in their hands to read; but usually they had treated them as trifling things not to be taken seriously. His mother had received the Mormon Elder

kindly at first, but when his visits continued and Marcus had him to dinner nearly every day, she had objected.

"I don't want him here," she had said with some warmth. "It is the talk of the town already, that you, Marcus, who should be a defender of the people against impostors and wicked men, take into your very home a member of the vile Mormon sect. What is it coming to? Are we to be disgraced? Has he won you over to his pernicious faith?"

Marcus had tried to explain matters, but when she found that he was actually in sympathy with the Mormon, and that he defended him, she had been overcome with emotion. The same scene had been repeated again and again until Marcus plainly saw that further reasonings would be useless.

As for Alice Merton, Marcus loved her as he had loved no other woman, but he had decided what to choose between love and duty. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you," was a promise which he meant to prove. He had not talked much with her on his changed views; and she, seemingly, did not get any meaning from the little figures of speech which he had used. She had partly assented to some of the views expressed in the pamphlets he had given her, but the fact that they had come from a source so "foul as Mormonism" was enough to make them of no consequence.

One day when they had been out sailing on the river, he had asked her if she would have loved him just the same had he not been a preacher, but just a common laborer, say, for example, a mason or a farmer. She had laughed heartily at the question, and had taken her

sailor hat and had fanned his red face. He had pressed her for an answer, and she had said, how could she know. Then, doubtless, they never would have met.

"But suppose I should now resign my pastorate and turn farmer, a real farmer I mean, to wear overalls and work in the fields, would you marry me next month as you have promised?" He had not smiled, but seemed to mean what he said, and the tears had come into the blue eyes of Alice.

"You are cruel," she had said.

"Forgive me if you think so, Alice; but I ask you the question in all earnestness. It may come to that yet. We know not what life has before us. My Alice loves me and will be mine, whatever befalls, will she not?" And she had yielded her head into his arm, and had whispered "Yes."

On Friday afternoon Marcus had finished the outlines of what he should say the next Sabbath. He could not bring himself to write it out in full. He had thought to speak to various leading members of his congregation about the step he was to take, so that it would not be such a surprise; but that might bring on an opposition that would prevent him from saying anything, and he wanted to make the explanation to the whole congregation. So he said not a word, not even to his brethren in the church.

That Friday evening he called on Alice. The time was opportune. Mr. Merton was away on business, and Mrs. Merton had retired with a headache. They would be alone, and Marcus could speak the plain truth undisturbed. Alice looked her best. The dress of soft white, the roses in her bosom and hair, the quiet, saddened

smile on the fair face—all this beauty went to Marcus with a force that made his heart throb with pain.

Marcus could not hide his emotion, try as he would.

"What is the matter?" she asked, as he took her hands. They sat on the sofa, and he looked into her face for a long time. Then he said:

"Alice, I am going to resign my pastorate next Sunday."

She said nothing, but her hands trembled.

"I am going to be plain Mr. King. Will that make any difference in your love?"

"No; if that is all. I will love Farmer Marcus King the same as the Reverend Marcus King. My word and promise is the same."

"But, darling, you suspect more than that. You can guess by this time why I am compelled to resign."

"What should I know? You have never told me."

"I have found that my position is a false one. My authority as a servant of God is an assumed one; the doctrines I have been teaching, that is some of them, are not true. God has opened my eyes to a greater light, and Alice, my darling, I am compelled to accept that."

"And that light is Mormonism?" said Alice, whose face was ashen gray.

"Yes; it is known by that name, but in truth, it is the pure Gospel of Jesus Christ. Listen, Alice, oh, listen to me,"—she had turned away her head—"[illegible] condemn me; do not reject the light. We will pray God together. He will open your eyes as He has mine. We will begin our new life together, stand by each other through the trials that will come. O, Alice, you cannot conceive of the beauty and the grandeur this new light

has opened up to me, will open up to you, my darling. You may not fully understand it now, but you will—Alice, I cannot go out in the cold world without you."

She did not cry out, she did not weep; her love had changed to fierce resentfulness; her tears had turned to ice.

"Ah, yes; I see it all now; you are going to join the Mormons."

"I know that is a harsh and evil-sounding word, but if you could only understand the truth, Alice, it would lose that aspect."

"I hate the word, Marcus. The brand of the devil clings to it. I shrink from it as I do from perdition. Do not name it again!"

Then is it all over between us, Alice? you love me no longer? You will not be my wife?"

"Marcus King, a Mormon, I cannot, will not marry. Be any other honest thing on earth and I will hold good my promise. Descend to the lowest depth of the commoner, be a farmer, a hod carrier, and I will be true to you, but—but that other—never Marcus, never!"

He saw that it was useless. His hope was gone; and yet he loved her, loved her more than ever. They had both arisen, and now they stood facing each other.

Then a power seemed to come to him, a power not of human origin. He took her hands again, and she made no resistance. He looked steadily into her eyes, and as he gazed they softened. Tears slowly filled them, and the whole marble form relaxed. He clasped her in his arms, and he was hardly conscious of what he said:

"Darling, darling, you are mine, my very own, for

time and for eternity. None but I can own you. Remember that, Alice, remember it. You are mine!"

He kissed her again and again, then gently laying her on the sofa, he passed from theroom.

CHAPTER III.

The Rev. Marcus King's congregation was the largest in the town of Hungerton. Lately it had been unusually large, owing, as some said, to his peculiar preaching; so that Sabbath when he meant to resign his position, Marcus found many people in attendance.

It was a beautiful day, and quite cool. The church and its surroundings looked their best. The people smiled and greeted each other, and were happy. Marcus came in exactly at the time to begin. The usual forms of song and prayer were completed, and Marcus stepped up to the pulpit. The congregation were as still as death when they saw their pastor pale and seemingly aged in a week. He had no Bible, no manuscript, only a slip of paper before him. His voice was low and full of emotion, as he began to speak:

"My friends, for twenty years did my father occupy this place, and expounded, with the light that God gave him, the Scriptures of His word. I have filled the position now nearly a year, and I hope I shall not be recreant to any trust by the action I shall take before you this day. Now, in the presence of you, my friends, I informally resign my position as your spiritual guide and advisor. Later in the day I shall formally hand my resignation to the elders of the church."

A hum of surprise swept through the congregation. A load seemed lifted from the shoulders of Marcus King. Color came back to his face, and he spoke again with a clear, ringing voice:

"My friends, you are surprised, of course; and I hope you will pardon me for not sparing you this ordeal. I wish to explain to you why I have taken this step, why I have thought it necessary to divest myself of the ministerial office, and I hope you, my friends, will bear with me in my short explanations. I will offend some of you; but that I cannot help. I have a position to defend, I have arguments to give, but I cannot go into detail at this time. If any of you desire further talk with me on any points I advance today, I shall be pleased to meet you at any time.

"First, then, I have come to this conclusion, that there has been and is today a universal apostasy from the pure Gospel of Christ. This falling away reaches to all sects and denominations of the Christian religion, our own being no exception.

"This conclusion has been arrived at by carefully considering the following facts: The Scriptures plainly predict such a falling away. Even as early as Christ's time, 'The kingdom of heaven suffered violence, and the violent took it by force.' The early persecutors of the church killed the apostles and propehts, and none were appointed in their place. The pagans of Greece and Rome ingrafted their rites aud doctrines onto the pure vine. This actual change in the simple ordinances of the Gospel to conform to pagan ceremonies can be traced historically. Shortly after the world was in spiritual darkness for over eight hundred years. As the Church of England puts it: 'Laity

and clergy, learned and unlearned, all ages and sects and degrees have been drowned in abominable idolatry.' The Reformation of Luther and Calvin did not bring back the pure Gospel of Jesus. None of the Reformers claimed any authority from heaven to this effect. They simply broke the power of Rome. The fruits of all churches to-day are not what they were in primitive times. Faith apparently has lost its power to save.

"So much for a general statement. Now I wish to justify myself by pointing out what I consider errors in our own confession of faith. I shall take them in their order as they come in this book," and he reached out and opened a small volume.

"Regarding the Scripture, this book says: 'The whole council of God concerning all things necessary for His own glory, man's salvation, faith and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deducted from it; unto which nothing is at any time to be added whether by *new revelation of the Spirit* or traditions of men.' This statement virtually closes the mouth of God. What is man that he should dictate to the Almighty?

"I can no longer believe that God is a being without body, parts or passions, as this confession teaches, neither that the Godhead is 'three persons of one substance,' because that is a contradiction of terms.

"The passage on predestination is familiar to you all. I shall not read it. I believe the doctrine to be false in the sense here stated. I have come to see that it is an awful thing to say that some men are fore-ordained to hell, and that they cannot help themselves. I do not believe that God takes pleasure in electing some to ever-

lasting punishment; I do not think such an act would manifest any of His glory. The doctrine annihilates the agency of man, and destroys the divine right of choice. My friends, if you wish to see a practical working of this teaching, go visit our dear friend Henry Sanford, in Hungerton jail.

"I cannot believe that God made the earth from nothing. Truth is reason, and reason teaches me differently.

"I do not now believe in the total depravity of the human race. We are the children of God. The offspring of an all-good parent cannot be wholly inclined to evil, as this creed teaches.

"I have ceased to believe in this book's teachings of the calling and election of men, and especially of infants. Believing, as I do, that men have the freedom to choose good or evil, it naturally follows that I must believe that man can fall from grace.

"This confession declares that baptism is not necessary to salvation; still it claims that this sacrament is the door into the church. This is inconsistent.

"I shall read the passage about synods and councils: 'All synods and councils since the Apostles' time, * * * may have erred; therefore they are not to be made the rule of faith and practice.' I understand scripture to be made when holy men speak or write under the influence of the Holy Ghost. We must come to one of two conclusions regarding synods and councils: either the men who composed them were not in possession of the Holy Ghost, or else this Divine Comforter has lost its power. I cannot believe the latter.

"I do not believe in the literal hell-fire here spoken of.

"Our system of religion makes no provisions for the salvation of the heathen. I think it lacks in that.

"Our church has not the organization of the first church, with Prophets, Apostles, etc.

"Our church bars simple men from preaching the Gospel. Christ chose His ministers from the poor and unlearned. And at last, to put an end to this painful array, neither I, nor my fellow ministers, have been called of God as was Aaron, therefore I have no authority to preach the Gospel and to administer in its saving ordinances."

At this point some members of the congregation passed out.

"My friends, I hope you will bear with me a few minutes longer. By what I have said, you may now think I have become a rank infidel. That is not so. I believe in the Scriptures and in the power of God to save, more than ever. And now, if I have taken away from any of you the staff which has supported you, I wish to give you a stronger, a better one. I do not believe that a man should tear down another's house, unless he has a better one into which to invite him.

"My dear friends, I have found that which the merchant in the parable sold all he had to purchase. I am also selling all I own to secure this prize. I wish to tell you of it, that as many of you as desire may also sell and buy.

"I bear my testimony that God lives, that He has again spoken from the heavens and restored the Gospel in its purity, and that the authority to administer in the things of God has again been given to men in the flesh. The Gospel is now being preached. Its first principles are now, as formerly, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, repent-

ance, baptism by immersion for the remission of sins, laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost. The true Church of Christ has been again organized, with Apostles, Prophets and all the gifts and blessings which existed in the Church during Christ's and the Apostles' time."

A man arose in the congregation and asked the privilege of putting a question to the pastor, which was granted.

"This church you have been talking about, Mr. King, is it the Mormon Church? Is it the Mormons you have reference to as receiving this new revelation?"

"Let me explain that," began the preacher, but the questioner cut him short with:

"Can you not answer me, yes or no?"

"Yes; I have reference to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, commonly known as the Mormon Church."

"I have had enough," said the man, with a wave of his hand to the congregation, half of whom arose with him and left the Church. Marcus said not a word, but stood in the pulpit until the last one who had any desire to leave had done so. Then he continued:

"I expected nothing else. Had you stoned me in this pulpit, I should not have been surprised. We are steeped in prejudice against that about which evil is spoken, but about which we know nothing. We are not willing to prove all things and hold fast to that which is good, as Paul advised. The word Mormon, my friend, has about the same sound to our ears as the word Nazarene had to the Jews. But I wish to tell you again before I close that Mormonism is the truth. It will fill that void in your breast; it will answer your questions regard-

ing life and death; it will give you clear conceptions of God; it will clear up many mysteries in the Scriptures; it will satisfy your soul; it will fill you with joy unspeakable. I can say no more. Investigate for yourselves; seek the Lord on the matter. God bless you all. Amen.—We shall sing the doxology."

A very few sang. Marcus uttered a short prayer, and the services were over. Not one stopped to shake hands with the minister. One or two lingered as if they would like to say something, but they, too, walked slowly away. Marcus gathered a few books and walked out. The deacon said nothing to him, but solemnly locked the doors. Marcus picked a flower from a heart-shaped bed on the lawn, softly closed the iron gate, and went home.

CHAPTER IV.

Thus it came about that Marcus King got rid of his titles of learning and supposed divinity and became plain Marcus King, Mormon; and to tell the truth, he was heartily glad to cast off the burden he had been carrying these many months. He felt as might the fabled Atlas, when he rolled the world from his own shoulders on to those of Hercules. His true position before God and the world was now clear; and even if he stood alone, as he had every reason to believe, still it was infinitely better than to continue to play the hypocrite. He might have kept his position, continued to "teach for doctrine the commandments of men" and kept the good-will and re-

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spect of his friends, even though he did not believe in what he preached, but that he could not do. Others might have done it, many do it, but he could not.

Neither Alice nor his mother had been at church to hear his last sermon. His action had been a terrible blow to both of them. All the night following, his mother had paced her room, and the efforts of Marcus to pacify her acted only as fuel to the flame of anger and mortification. Early next morning she came into the library where Marcus had spent the night. She was partially composed, but it was with great effort that she spoke.

"I thought that I had a son who would be an honor to his dead father," she began; "but I now understand different. Why have you brought ignominy on your parents, both the living and the dead?"

"Mother, as I have said before, I have done nothing shameful—it is no disgrace to do one's duty as God gives one the light. I know father, and I think that he would have done the same had he been in my position."

"And what will you do now?"

"I don't know, mother."

"I suppose you will go to Utah?"

"Most likely, though that is not definite."

"And how are you going?"

"Well, mother, if I go, it will have to be like the rest of the Saints, across the Western Plains in a wagon or cart."

"Yes, that's it. If you are not killed by Indians or the hardships of the journey, you will have to live a life of degradation among the Mormons. And here I shall be alone. O, Marcus, don't go! You will kill me, you will kill me!"

She broke down and sobbed, and he paced back and forth by her.

"Mother, do not try to persuade me to turn back now. I cannot do it. I tell you that some day you will see the need of this step. You may not see it now, but then you will bless me for it."

To this scene were added many like it between mother and son, until both saw that no good came from them.

The following Monday, the wonderful scene in the church of the Rev. Marcus King was the talk of the whole town. It was so unexpected, so new, and so awful that a minister of the Gospel should from the pulpit say such things against the church, and then come out in favor of Mormonism! Nothing in the history of the town had ever made such a stir. Groups of men stood on the street corners and talked about it. The women went to their neighbors to tell and hear. The clerk forgot his customer in his eagerness to listen to the story. The carpenter sat on his bench, the blacksmith's fire went out, the baker's bread was burned, the seamstress' needle was stuck in the dress: Hungerton was all agog.

Marcus did not venture out that day, but towards evening he walked down to the river, and followed a street leading along the stream.

A few people who recognized him in the twilight, stared at him blankly. On the outskirts of the town Marcus met Elder James, and together they walked along the country road. They had much to talk about.

"I congratulate you, Mr. King," said the elder. "I heard your sermon yesterday."

"What! were you there?"

"Yes; I sat in the farther corner most of the time, and then got away without attracting much notice."

"I think you had better remain quiet for a time. The people are very much worked up, and they lay the blame on you, you know."

"I think I shall leave town tomorrow for a few days, at least. We have a meeting this evening, a private one, just a few Saints and friends whom we can trust. Will you come?"

He would like nothing better; so after walking down the road some distance, they retraced their steps and entered a small dwelling. A few had already gathered. Some were strange to Marcus, while three were members of his former congregation. They were somewhat surprised to see him, but he followed Elder James' example and pressed them all by the hand. They all chatted freely together but in a subdued tone, as word had been brought that a mob would surely break up any meeting the Mormons might hold. Marcus saw that most of those present were of the poorer working class. He could not help contrasting his own position that evening with the one he had held but yesterday.

The meeting was a very informal affair. Singing was dispensed with, but there was an opening prayer. Then Elder James talked for a few moments, and he was followed by some members of the congregation who bore their testimonies to what they had experienced. One young woman, Eliza Dixon by name, stated that she had been to the church the day before and had heard Mr. King. She had always believed what he said about the generally accepted Christian doctrines, and when he told of new revelation and the restoration of the Gospel, she

was glad because that was what she had been looking for. Even that morning she had sought out a friend whom she knew was acquainted with the Mormon missionary. She had been directed to Elder James, and they had had a long talk. She was ready for baptism, she said.

One or two others followed in the same strain, and the elder asked Marcus if he desired to speak. At first he said no, but afterwards arose and expressed his pleasure in the meeting. It reminded him, he said, of what he had read of the primitive Christians when they met in secret places for fear of their persecutors. He had found the truth, and he thanked God for it. If his words yesterday had caused one soul to come to the same knowledge, he had been amply repaid for the effort.

After the meeting, a little band of men and women, with bundles of clothes in their hands, went silently down to the river. There, in the shadow of the trees, Elder James took them, one at a time, down in o the water and baptized them.

A few days afterwards Marcus was visited by a delegation of ministers. They came to labor with him and show him the error of his ways; kindly at first; but when he met their arguments boldly, they changed their manner to one of ridicule. They rehearsed to him the usual tales about Joseph Smith and the atrocious Mormons, at all of which Marcus only smiled. The conference ended very unsatisfactorily, as far as the ministers were concerned.

Weeks passed. Marcus learned that Alice Merton had gone to visit friends in another state, to be absent all summer, so he heard no more of her. He came to no

better understanding with his mother, and she had now no great objection to his leaving. Marcus and Elder James often counseled together. They both saw that it was useless for Marcus to stay where he was any longer. His influence was gone. He was now an outcast so far as Hungerton society was concerned. Marcus also got the spirit of gathering; he also knew that his future lay with the Latter-day Saints. From one view point, his upward career in the world had suddenly ceased, and he had been precipitated to the bottom. He must begin life anew, and begin at the bottom. The sooner he began the better; so it was good-bye to Hungerton and all its familiar scenes. There was an attraction westward, to the new Zion arising from out the great American desert, and Marcus made all preparation for the journey.

On the train which bore him westward Marcus met an old college acquaintance, who was going on a vacation trip to his old home in Missouri before he settled down to his work.

"You see," explained his friend, "I had a pretty fair position where I have been, but there wasn't enough salary in it. A person can't live on fifteen hundred a year and keep up appearances, you know. So I got a call from an adjoining church with a salary of two thousand dollars, and of course I accepted. I am going to arrange for my house, and you must come and see me when I get settled."

"I fear I shall not be able—you haven't heard—no, of course you haven't; but I'm not a minister now; I've given it up—I have resigned."

"Why, what's the matter, Mark?"

"Well, you know we used to have great times dis-

cussing theology at school. You also know that we didn't believe half that was taught us. Still you and I and hundreds of others said nothing about our honest opinions, but sold our consciences for a salary. Some got a thousand, some fifteen hundred, and some more. I've quit it."

His friend looked surprised, and hardly knew what to say.

"You're startled, of course, and shocked; but I'm not sorry; what I have lost in worldly things I have gained in heavenly. You don't understand that; of course not." Whereupon Marcus told him the whole history of the past three months.

His reverend friend leaned back in the car seat and said nothing. He seemed shocked beyond utterance. Marcus went on explaining to him the principles of Mormonism, and he was not interrupted. Only once did he say quietly;

"Friend Marcus, all that you have been saying about the 'principles of the Gospel' is all right enough in its place, but you know that we have placed too much emphasis on creeds and dogmas. A true and living faith in Christ, a love of Christ, is, after all, the only essential. You surely could have taught that and kept your position."

"Yes, I know that theologians are drifting into the belief that articles of faith, creeds and doctrinal principles have nothing to do with Christ and the church; but I differ. Creeds are necessary, foundation principles are necessary. Christ taught them. Principles are the forerunners of practice. When creeds and doctrines are wrong, the fruits they bear are evil. Teach people cor-

rect principles and their lives will be all right, said Joseph Smith; and that doctrine is sound."

"And so you are going to Utah?" asked his friend after a pause.

"I'm going to try."

"Well, Marcus, I can only hope that you'll get out of this alive. I don't know much about the Mormons, but father does. He helped to rid Missouri of them. My dear friend, I pity you."

"Spare your tears, old boy. You may need them in your next sermon, especially if you speak of the damnation of the heathen, or the final state of the unregenerated."

That ended the talk. Marcus soon changed cars and his friend went on his own way.

Marcus' destination was away out on the prairies of the west, where he would meet Elder James and prepare for the trip across the Plains to Salt Lake City.

CHAPTER V.

It was the latter part of July when he reached Iowa City, which was then the western terminus of the railroad and the fitting-out point. Of all the strange scenes which he had witnessed thus far, that at Iowa City was the most interesting and wonderful. Here for the first time he met a large number of his co-religionists. At first he experienced a shock to his feelings at sight of their personal appearance, but when he understood that they had traveled long distances from various quarters of the earth, his good sense told him that they could not have

the appearance of stay-at-home Christians in the town of Hungerton, for instance. When he arrived, there were at least six hundred Mormons, most of whom were from Great Britain, and expected to get to the Great Salt Lake Valley that fall. How were they to do it? They seemed to be extremely poor. There were very few horses, mules, or even oxen, and less wagons.

As they took a walk out among the camp, Elder James said: "Here you see an answer to your question. See what these men are busy with! These two wheeled carts are to carry their clothing and provisions."

"And who are to pull the carts?" asked Marcus.

"They themselves, the men, perhaps the women."

"How far is it to the Valley?"

"Thirteen hundred miles."

"And I understand there are burning deserts and rough mountains to cross?"

"Oh, yes, more than one."

"And they will have to walk every step of the way?"

"Yes; most of them. Hundreds have done it, and no doubt these will also do it. You see, they must get to the Valley. They can't stay here. This company will start in a few days. It will be rather late, but they will be able to make it, if they have moderate luck."

"But, Brother James, I can't see how they can do it. It will be awful—the women and children!"

"You've read of the Pilgrims and the *Mayflower*?"

"Yes; but, great heavens, that was nothing to compare with this!"

Marcus was soon made acquainted with the leaders of the people, whom he found to be intelligent men of Elder James' type. By their advice he bought a yoke of

oxen, a wagon, provisions, and other necessary articles. Elder James helped him. He gave the young man some practical lessons in yoking and controlling his oxen. It was all extremely new and strange, but Marcus went to work in earnest, and soon mastered the art of swinging his buckskin whip with a "gee" or a "haw." Elder James was not going west; but he arranged with a family to do the cooking for Marcus, that he might be freed from that responsibility.

A few days after his arrival at Iowa City, the hand-cart company was ready to be off. That morning there was a scene, a scene in which mingled the ludicrous and pitiable: the six hundred men, women, and children on the move westward. Each family, or group of four or five, had a cart in which were loaded their provisions and clothing. The carts were simple affairs: two wheels with light frames over the axles and with short shafts. At the end of the shafts were cross bars which projected out on each side. Here the "human horses" attached themselves and started off. There were a few wagons along, drawn by oxen. These carried provisions and some of the heavy baggage.

Marcus went up to a cart that had stopped. They were adjusting the load, and there was some discussion as to the best position of the pullers. The cart was owned by a poor English family, and was not a very substantial one. The axles were of wood and the boxes of leather. The father got in the shafts to be the main propelling power, his wife took her place by his side and grasped the cross bar, and a fifteen year old son went on the other side. A grown daughter had arranged a kind of harness of leather straps which she fastened over her shoulders

and then to the end of the shafts. Thus away they went, while a little three year old boy sat on top of the load, shouting in great glee.

Marcus walked with them some distance. The whole scene had a strangeness about it. Everybody seemed happy enough. They laughed and shouted to each other, and made their jokes at each other's expense; but Marcus could not help thinking of the thirteen hundred miles before them.

"Come, brother, where's your cart?" some one greeted Marcus; and he turned to see the broad smile of an English girl, who was pulling very little on a cart. Two young fellows were doing the work. "Hi'm the driver, ye know," she laughed. "What do you think of my 'osses?"

"They'll do," replied Marcus, "I think they will take you through."

But all did not take the matter so pleasantly. A number were discontented and grumb'ed. Others said they would not be able to make it, and Marcus looked into their sad eyes and believed them. It seemed worse for the older people and the children. Some of the latter soon got tired and cried, and then the father, or perchance the older brother, would lift the child up on his shoulders and carry the extra weight as he pulled his load.

And all of these people had left their native land for this! Most of them had been tossed about for long weeks on the ocean to get to this! Many had left comfortable homes to travel footsore and weary across these plains! Yes, there would be no more rest for many of them until they laid their weary bodies down under the

sod of the prairie! And it had all been done for the love of the Gospel,—for the love of the light which had made him also an outcast from home and a wanderer among strange peoples and lands.

Marcus turned and went back. When he looked around again, the train was hidden by a rise in the road, and only the thin cloud of dust which arose above it showed their westward path.

CHAPTER VI.

About a week after the departure of the hand-cart company, Marcus started with the wagon train. The last act before leaving was to mail a letter to his mother. The season was late, but the company was small and they could travel rapidly. Marcus soon learned to accommodate himself to his surroundings. He followed the example of the other teamsters and walked by the wagon most of the time, although he could have ridden. Elder James had explained to the captain of the company Marcus King's former position, and he had made it as easy as possible for the ex-minister. Had Marcus known this he would have resented it. He felt as though he wanted to work with the rest. He was no better than they, even though his whole life up to that time had been one of bodily ease, and his training unfit for the life of a pioneer.

After the day's journey, Marcus was ofttimes extremely tired; and when the tents were pitched and the fires were lighted (which was only when they had plenty of wood and there was no danger of Indians), he never had

strength to join in any merriment. At first, the dancing in which they often indulged, seemed strange to Marcus. Why should religious people dance, especially on such a journey? After the hard day's toil, out would come a violin, a space on the grass would be cleared, and a dozen couples merrily whirled into the strains of the weird music. He had once expressed his doubt as to its propriety to a brother teamster who had crossed the plains a number of times, and the explanation had been given that it was a good thing to drive away "the blues." They had been standing looking at a merry crowd, and at that moment a good-looking, roguish maiden stepped up to them, and said that she was looking for a partner. The teamster had instantly taken the girl's arm and slipped it into Marcus', and before he knew what he was doing, he was whirling away with her over the soft grass. The truth was, as he afterward learned, that the girl had taken the bold step that she might say she had danced with a very sanctimonious sectarian minister. After that, she was not the only one with whom he stepped to the time of the music.

But they did not always dance during the evenings. There were a good many fine singers in the company, and the songs of Zion often rang out over the still, moonlighted prairies. They always rested on Sunday and had religious services. Marcus was interested in the strange sermons often delivered, and he could not help contrasting them with the smoothly-flowing, logically-arranged discourses which he and his fellow ministers had been trained to give. There were a number in the company who were returning home from a two or three years' mission, and the experiences which they related were extremely

interesting. Marcus was asked to speak a number of times. Dressed in a blue "jumper," and his corduroy trousers tucked into the tops of long boots, he mounted the dry-goods box and did the best he could under his changed environments. One day he told them his history —how he came to a knowledge of the truth. After the meeting, an elderly lady came up to him with tears in her eyes.

"Dear brother, God bless you," she said. "I left a boy at home—a boy about your age. He is in the seminary learning to be a Methodist preacher. He couldn't see the truth, though I talked with him about the Gospel."

She clung to his hands and looked the young man in the face, while the tears slowly trickled down the careworn furrows in her cheeks.

"And you also have a mother?" she asked.

"Yes; I have a mother at home." She still clung to his hands; and a big lump arose in his throat. If ever he had seen a saintly face, he thought, this must be one before him. His eyes grew dim; he could not see the wagons, or cattle, or tents; the rolling prairie faded as a dissolving view, and another picture came into its place, —a wonderful, ever-changing picture. It was his mother and Alice, fair Alice, with a sweet, sad smile; the old home embedded in trees and flowers; the cosy study with walls of books; the church and upturned faces; the hills covered with forests; the river, bending in broad silvery bands around the town of Hungerton; and every trifling detail mingled and mixed, then stood out in clear distinctiveness in this wonderful kaleidoscopic picture.

"Brother King, will you come with me to my tent?" said the sister. "I do want to talk with you."

"Yes, I shall be pleased to."

She led the way to a tent. The sun was sinking through a hazy sky. The wild odor of the plains pervaded the evening air. The camp lay as a speck of life on that vast level surface, even as a lone ship in mid-ocean. Before some of the tents small fires blazed, and there were the usual preparations for the evening meal.

"Janet, Brother King has come to eat supper with us."

The girl busy at the fire suddenly straightened herself. Her mother's greeting startled her, and she looked somewhat confused.

"I invited him to come and see us, and of course he'll stay to supper. I want to have a talk with him, he reminds me so much of your brother David. Haven't you met my daughter before, Brother King?"

"Not to speak to her, I think," said Marcus.

"I am pleased to meet you, Brother King," said the girl, giving him a warm shake of the hand.

"Can you find a seat? We left our chairs at home, you know. Here, take this box—let me put this quilt on it."

Marcus looked, nearly stared, at the girl. She wore a dress of light calico, which became her as though it had been of a much finer material, fitting perfectly the full, rounded, but not large figure. Her face was full of warm color, and she had red hair. The novelist would have called it auburn, or golden, or some such evading term, but in truth it was plain red; and it was just the proper color, too. Any other shade would not have

blended so naturally and beautifully with that clear, rosy skin. The girl's faint, pleasant smile and easy, graceful manner as she moved about the camp, also drew the young man's attention.

"Now then, dear folks," said Marcus, perceiving that they were making some extra effort for his comfort, "do not put yourself to any inconvenience on my account. Though this life is new to me, if I mistake not, it is equally foreign to you."

"Yes," said the mother, "we made great sacrifices to get to Zion this year, and this mode of traveling is hard on old people like me—but mind, I'm not complaining; if I may but lay my bones with the people of God, I shall be content."

"Mother's always talking of laying down her bones, Brother King, when the fact is, that she's strong and will live many years yet. She stands this trip nearly as well as I do."

The meal of milk and bread and fried bacon was spread out on a cloth in the tent, and bundles and boxes were brought upon which to sit. Sister Harmon (for that was her name) also brought out a tin of preserves.

"Where did you say you came from, Brother King?" asked the mother.

Marcus told her.

"Why, Janet, we lived within ten miles of Brother King all our lives. We came from Newton, ten miles from Hungerton. You know the place."

"Yes," said he, "I've been at Newton a number of times; but I'm not acquainted much there."

"Well, it's interesting, anyway, isn't it, Janet?"

"It's quite strange," answered Janet. "Have an-

other piece of bread, Brother King. Ashes got in my bake pan, and it's not very nice looking, but"—

"Don't offer a y excuses, sister; I think I can understand all your difficulties in the way of cooking."

"Well, well," the mother continued to repeat, "and so you're from Hungerton. Strange that I should not have seen you. I've been there a number of times. Do you remember to have met Brother King, Janet?"

"No, I do not now remember, mother. Have some of this preserve. This came all the way from home."

And so they talked and ate. Sister Harmon told of her son David who ridiculed Mormonism. What a time they had had with him, and how angry he had been when he learned that they were going to Utah. Janet said but little, and Marcus tried as best he could to cheer them. He found that he was not alone in trials. No doubt these two women had passed through much tribulation for the truth. Perhaps every soul in that camp had made a sacrifice, many of them greater than his own. His visit that evening helped Marcus to be more contented with his lot. He was not such a hero, after all.

Westward, westward the emigrant train moved, rolling in long procession across the prairie, slowly climbing the hills and coming down the inclines with rattle and confusion. Every night the wagons were placed in a circle forming a corral or enclosure, into which the cattle were driven next morning to be yoked. The daily routine of the same things, day after day, week after week, began to be irksome to Marcus King. At the end of a month, it seemed to him that they might have passed half way around the globe.

Still westward they moved. The season was getting

late, and they would have to hurry. The nights began to be cold, and a number of the last streams had a coating of ice. Marcus was sunburnt and roughened and shaggy enough for any frontiersman. He might now have walked through the streets of Hungerton without being recognized.

He was always free and friendly with every member of that company, but still there are always preferences. He seemed to find the best companionship in Sister Harmon and her daughter. He soon learned that they were of a class akin to the one to which he had belonged. Their modes of living, their thoughts and tastes, had been like his own. They were intelligent. Janet had been to the best schools. Marcus had no doubt that the now calloused hands could better bring sweet sounds from ivory keys. This preference was natural enough. It takes time to make radical changes in thought and action, and Marcus could not be blamed for ofttimes passing the wilder, more boisterous group to have a quiet chat with Janet and her mother.

One morning Janet came to where Marcus was walking beside his wagon. Her mother had not been well enough to walk, and it had been lonesome without her.

"I'm so glad you came over," Marcus said, when she tried to give some excuse for coming. "I'm glad to see you, Janet. Walk along with me awhile and we'll have a talk."

There had been a brisk shower the night before, and the road did not give out its usual cloud of dust. The air was cool, and it was a pleasure to begin the day's journey. Janet took off her large straw hat, that the cool breeze might better blow into her warm face.

"Janet, I think you might have let your mother finish that story the other evening," began the young man.

Janet got the whip and proceeded to give it a number of fire-cracker pops; but she did not answer Marcus.

"It promised to be a regular romance. I always did admire a good story, and I haven't read one for so long, that I fairly hunger for one. You tell me it, Janet."

"It was nothing, indeed it was. Mama colored it so. I was nearly out of patience with her."

"Which was wrong."

"Of course it was; I was sorry for it. Did you see the handcart company start from Iowa City?"

Marcus smiled at her turning of the subject.

"Yes; and the captain said yesterday that it is not far ahead."

"I've wondered all along why we do not overtake them."

"Brother Brown said that a handcart company of strong young people can beat any ox-team across the Plains; but I understand this company just in front has many old people, and they are having a hard time.

Then he told her of the start he had witnessed at Iowa City. "It would have been extremely funny had it not been for the sadness of the scene. Your mother was just saying, the other evening, when you interrupted her, that—"

"Brother King, how is it that we haven't seen any Indians? Our friends at home said we would be scalped sure, but I told them that no Indian would dare to touch my hair—he'd burn his fingers if he did.

"I hadn't heard that red-skins were afraid of—of, that is—"

"Of red hair. How stupid you are! What's the use of being so delicate about telling the truth. It's red, and I know it, and you know it. I'm not one of those people who do not like to be told their hair is red."

"Well, for my part, I think you are sensible in that; besides some people look better with red hair. I don't think the Creator made any mistake. I believe this subject had a bearing on the story your mother was telling."

"It hadn't; not a bit."

"Well, how did it happen, then that—"

"I must go to mother. She may need me."

"No; she doesn't. See, she's sitting up in the wagon, and talking to the driver. I'll warrant she's telling him the rest of that story."

"O, Brother King, you're an awful man!"

Then they both laughed and walked on for a few minutes in silence.

"Shall I tell you that story?" she asked.

"Yes; do."

"Well, once upon a time—"

"Now, don't compose as you go along."

"Don't interrupt me, or I shall lose the thread of the narrative."

"Excuse me."

"Once upon a time a young man and a young woman who had red hair were engaged to be married. The young woman became a 'Mormon' and the young man wouldn't have her."

"Well?"

"That's all."

"That's pretty short."

"Yes; the engagement *was* pretty short."

"You don't seem to be sorry over it."

"I'm not a bit sorry. I'm glad it turned out as it has."

"Won't you get on my wagon and ride? You must be tired."

"Oh, no; I'm not. I want to hear *your* story now."

"My story?"

"Yes, your story; now don't deny that you have one."

"No, Janet, I'll not deny it. I have one and I'll tell it to you."

Their laughter had ceased.

"It's very strange—our two stories. Janet, if I hadn't become a 'Mormon' I would now have been a married man, and had for a wife the sweetest and best girl in Hungerton."

"It must have been hard for you. You cared, I can see that."

"Cared! I wish I hadn't. I wish I didn't now care; but I don't know that I should say that; it may be wrong. Yes, Janet, Alice Merton is a good girl, but of course she doesn't understand. I would gladly have left all the rest if only Alice had come with me."

Marcus had become so earnest that Janet could say nothing. At this point the train came in sight of an immense herd of buffaloes. They had been to the river for water, and were now heading for their feed grounds again. The great moving mass seemed to be coming directly upon the long train. Apparently, the train of wagons was directly in the path of the herd. As the animals came nearer, the captain of the train came riding on a mule and shouted orders to the drivers. The front wagons

were hurried forward as fast as possible while the captain rode by Marcus, and the very next wagon behind him was ordered to turn about as quickly as possible. This movement made a large gap in the train, for which the leaders of the buffaloes now made. The earth fairly shook as on they came.

Janet stood still for an instant, then with a cry turned to run back across the gap.

"Mother, O mother's back there!" she said.

Marcus caught her and forcibly held her. "Your mother's all right," he said. "The buffaloes will tramp you under foot. Come, get back here."

The foremost animals were now in the opening, and the herd pressed closely behind. They swept through with great shaggy heads, wild eyes, and dilated nostrils. The drivers stood guard over the nearest cattle, to prevent any stampede. As the last stragglers went galloping by, pop, pop, went the rifles, and a buffalo dropped not twenty yards from where Murcus was standing with Janet clinging to his arm.

"I couldn't let that chance go by without getting some fresh meat," said the hunter, one of the teamsters.

Janet was pale, and trembled violently. As soon as the wagons drove up again, she hastened to her mother, and there she had a good cry.

That evening the whole company had fresh buffalo steak for supper. Marcus came to Sister Harmon's tent, as he said, to see what practical value Janet's course in the cooking school had been; but that evening after the company had gathered for prayers, and thanks had been given to God for His watch care that day, Marcus touched Janet's arm and said:

"Those things we were talking about today—let it be only between you and me."

"Yes; of course," she answered.

"Then good night."

"Good night."

CHAPTER VII.

The company lay at camp in the hills of Wyoming All that day the weather had been cold, and now a sharp wind was blowing from the north. The sky was full of clouds, and there were all indications of a storm, and a snowstorm at that. What if winter should burst upon them now while they were yet a month's travel from the valley?

Marcus King began to realize what it meant to be a Mormon in that day. Their company had been well supplied and were not as yet suffering, but there was no telling what the future would bring. The hand-cart company was just ahead. The newly-made graves which the wagon company passed, indicated the condition of affairs with the people in front. Marcus thought of that start in Iowa. What they must have suffered! What they must yet suffer to reach their destination!

That evening Marcus took his gun and walked out over some low hills skirting the road. It was a wild evening. The clouds hurried across the shining moon. He had heard the cry of a wolf and made his way towards it. He could see the creature sitting on a rocky knoll, and his unearthly howl added to the night's dismalness. Presently another cry come upon the wind. The wolf saw Marcus

and trotted slowly off. The strange sound come again—surely it was the cry of a human being. Marcus instantly thought of Indians, and turned towards camp, when, from out of a ravine into which the wolf had been looking, came the distinct cry of a child. Marcus paused and peered down into the shadows. He thought he discerned something under a bank, but it might be an Indian camp or perhaps a party of hostile savages.

The wind came up in great sweeps from the ravine, carrying with it that human cry. Marcus was in doubt. Perhaps some belated emigrant was perishing. The night was coming on, and no one could live through it unprotected. That cry was of a child. Marcus went cautiously forward down the ravine. Presently the moon cast a hurried stream of light, and the outlines of a cart were plainly seen. Marcus quickened his steps, and from under the bank came the faint cry of "Mama, Mama."

"Hallo," shouted Marcus.

There was no answer, but the child ceased its crying.

He leaped down the bank, and as he did so, a woman started to her feet. She had a child in her arms. In the shelter of the bank sat a man. His knees were drawn up and his head rested upon them. The cart lay overturned under the bank.

"Who are you? What is the matter?" asked Marcus hurriedly.

The woman seemed to be half asleep. The man did not stir. Marcus saw that something must be done immediately. He went up to the woman and shook her violently.

"Come, you're freezing to death here. Come, wake up and move. Our camp is not far away."

She at last realized her position, and with a glad cry began to talk to her child. She shook the man by the shoulders.

"Get up, John," she said. "Someone's come to help us. Camp's not far off. Come, John, O, John, get up. We're saved, John—O, please sir, I'm afraid he's gone. Help me get him up? He's freezing to death,—O, John, here's help!"

The child wailed piteously, and the mother tried to soothe it by pressing it closely to her breast. Marcus pulled off his coat and wrapped it around the child. Then he took hold of the man, and by the woman's help, they got him back to consciousness.

Another chance for life nerved the woman to strength. She helped Marcus right the cart, and then worked diligently with her husband, who, when he at last realized where he was, took hold of the cart and walked behind, as the woman and Marcus pulled it towards camp.

The woman explained in a few broken sentences that they had somehow become separated from the company, and having left the road, the cart had fallen over the bank. They had tried to lift it up again, but they were both so weak that they could not. Thus they had waited for help, and had sat down to rest, which would have been their last had not Marcus come to their assistance.

When within hailing distance of the camp, Marcus shouted, and a guard came out who helped them into camp. Marcus took them to his tent and then sent for Janet to come and help take care of them. By the light of the tent lantern, Marcus saw that the woman's face was familiar to him, but he could not place her. After

they had been made as comfortable as possible he asked her:

"Where have I seen you before?"

"At Hungerton. My name is Eliza Dixon, and you are Marcus King."

Such was the case. That last sermon of his in the Hungerton church had moved this woman to investigate and embrace the Gospel. She had told her husband and he had believed; and here they were perishing in the wilderness.

Next morning Marcus went to the captain's tent and said to him:

"Those people I brought to camp last night—well, it will be impossible for them to go on with their hand-cart. The man can hardly walk and the woman is not much better; and then the child—"

"Well, Brother King, what can we do?"

"If you have no objection, they can take my outfit, and I will take their cart and go on with the hand-cart company."

The captain tenderly placed his hand on the speaker's shoulder and said:

"Do you know what a sacrifice that would mean to you?"

"I think so, at least, partly; but I cannot do otherwise."

"Then all right, and may the Lord be with you."

When Marcus told his rescued friends of his purpose, at first they cried for joy; but then, when they understood its full meaning, they tried to prevail on him not to do so. It would be too great a sacrifice. But Marcus was firm in his purpose.

Early that same day the wagon company overtook the hand-carts, and as the wagons went on Marcus stopped with John Dixon's hand-cart in charge. Janet and her mother looked mutely at him, but could say nothing; and as he took their hands to say good-by, the captain came up. Placing one hand on Janet's shoulder and another on Marcus', he said:

"Brother King, by this shall all men know that you are a disciple of Christ—you have the true sign, the true love of Christ. God bless you."

No mortal pen can fully describe that hand-cart journey from the bleak hills of Wyoming to the valley of the Great Salt Lake; and the pen that writes these words shall not attempt it—but just a word:

Winter came on in all its fury, and through the snow and sleet the poor half-frozen, half-starved travelers dragged their carts along. Every day some one gave up the struggle, and was laid under the frozen sod by the wayside and there left. Husbands left wives, wives left husbands, parents left children, and children left parents —and the broken remnant still struggled westward. They climbed the hills, they waded the freezing streams. The piercing wind blew through their thread-bare clothing. They starved, they froze, they died. Had not help come from the valley, they would all have surely perished.

Marcus King reached the lowest possible stage of human misery and suffering on that journey; but he had one thought which sustained him. It was the thought of Christ in the garden and on the cross. He suffered for others, and He was God's Son. Marcus, in a way, was following in his Master's footsteps. "Take up thy cross and follow me," rang in his ears, and through all that

desperate struggle for existence it was the only anchor to his soul. And yet through all that terrible misery, there was a peace in his breast. Whence it came Marcus was in no state to reason out; but afterwards he knew: The performing of a sublime duty carries with it a peace of soul which surpasseth understanding.

* * * * * * * * *

A beautiful spring morning crept over the rugged Wasatch Mountains and into the valley of the Great Salt Lake, as Marcus King walked slowly up the path winding along the sage-brush plains. His face was pale, his features pinched, and his steps were those of a sick man. When he reached the bank of the small stream, he sat down on it, bared his head, and sat looking out over the valley towards the distant mountains.

Every morning for a week he had taken this walk, and it had done him much good. His strength was coming back to him, and with his strength came renewed hopes and new aspirations.

Marcus had certainly been near death's door. For two months since his arrival he had been hovering between this world and the next, and one more experience had been added to him, namely, the power of the Priesthood. Time and again the Elders of the Church had anointed him with oil and prayed for him, and instantly he had felt that once more he had been snatched from the hands of the destroyer. It had surely and literally been a battle between life and death with him; but now he had the victory, and he was on the way to a speedy restoration to his usual health.

When spring came at last and he could get out of doors, the strangeness of the country came more forcibly

to him: the grand, rugged, treeless mountains; the wild, bare bench lands; and the marshes near the lake. In his walk that spring morning he counted the little, low, log huts of the settlement and found the total to be seventeen; and none of them were older than five years. They stood on both sides of a broad, straight street, along both sides of which rows of trees had already been planted. As yet, little of the surrounding land had been cleared of the gray sagebrush. The small garden plats by the side of the cabins were just sprouting out into long, green rows.

Marcus went back home quite tired that morning. He sat down on a bench on the south side of the house under a roof of freshly-cut willows and cottonwoods. Eliza Dixon was busy getting breakfast. Marcus had his home with John and Eliza, and they had done for him all that loving hearts could devise and willing hands could carry out. The poverty of that winter and spring is well known in history, and these people suffered with the rest.

"I'm going to help you plant potatoes this afternoon, John," said Marcus to his friend that morning.

"Are you strong enough?"

"I can do a little; besides, I must learn to be a farmer. You folks don't pay me anything for all those sermons I preach you, and so I must make my living at something else." He still tried to be pleasant and make his jokes.

"Well, if you want to begin," said John, "I'll give you something easy." From the house he brought a sack of potatoes, placed them on the bench by Marcus' side and proceeded to give him a lesson on how to cut them into proper sizes.

"But these are small enough as they are, it seems to me," said Marcus.

"Yes; but we must make them reach as far as possible. Now, you'll have to be careful. Have no more than two eyes to each piece, and take care not to cut an eye so that it will be spoiled."

Just as Marcus had become thoroughly interested in his work, Janet Harmon came around the corner of the house. She carried something in her hands, covered by an apron. The meeting was unexpected, it seemed, as Janet stopped and the color came into her face. Janet had also changed. Wind and weather had played sad havoc with her clear, beautiful skin. The round face was peaked and the large eyes seemed sunken. Her hair hung in two long braids down her back.

"Good morning, Janet, I thought you had gone to the city."

"Yes; but I've come back; and I thought you went—you take a walk every morning about this time."

"Yes; but I also came back, you see." They laughed.

"Are you peeling potatoes for dinner?" she asked. "Where do you get such luxuries?"

"Oh, these are not to cook, but to plant. I was just thinking, Janet, if I had all the potato peeling that our cook at Hungerton used to provide for her pig, what a big field of potatoes I could plant. I wonder if peelings would grow, anyway?"

Janet stepped in at the open door, placed what was under the apron on the table, and then, as Eliza was not in, she went back to Marcus.

"Sit down," he said, "and tell me all the news."

She handed him two letters, both from his mother,

and he read them aloud to her. They were not very cheering letters. The mother still considered herself disgraced by her son's action. Still she felt sure that everybody would forgive him even yet if he was alive and could get back. Alice had been to see her, and had stayed with her much of the time during the winter. Alice was a great comfort to her. She never mentioned his name, but still, through all the trying ordeal the girl loved her wayward son.

"Poor mother, and poor Alice," and that was about all he could say.

The potatoes were neglected for a few moments. Then he turned to the girl at his side and said:

"Janet, you should have seen Alice. You ought to be acquainted with her. I know you would have liked her; you couldn't help it, no more than I can help loving her yet. She's the sweetest and best—but there, I've told you that so often before."

Janet rose hurriedly.

"I'm glad to see you so well, Brother King, and I hope you'll soon recover entirely. Goodby."

In a moment she was away, and Marcus soon went to work again. When Eliza called him to breakfast, he sat down as usual on his own raw-hide chair, and when he raised his head after the blessing he caught sight of the extra bowl by the side of his plate.

"Hello, what's this?" he exclaimed, as he peered into it. "Pudding, rice pudding! Can I believe my eyes?"

"If you doubt them, try your palate," said Eliza.

"But where did you get your rice? And I verily believe there are rasins in it."

"Janet brought it," said she.

"Ah, I see. This is what she had under her apron. Janet's a good soul, isn't she."

"I think Janet's a good girl."

"Well, I'm going to taste this," said Marcus.

"Oh, it's yours.

"Not all of it. I'm not quite that greedy."

"But Janet brought it for you."

"You don't know that. You were out. Here, each must have a taste;" and amid protestations, Marcus divided the tasty morsel between them.

That afternoon Marcus planted in the plowed furrow the potatoes he had cut. He was very careful to place them with the eye side up and exactly eighteen inches apart. While John plowed them under, Marcus rested. The cut potatoes brought his thoughts back to the potato peelings, and they in a long string led him to Hungerton and into the kitchen of the parsonage. From the cook to his mother, and from his mother to Alice was a natural channel of thought; but how his mind leaped from Alice Merton to rice puddings can never be explained by any known law of psychology. From rice puddings to Janet Harmon was an easy stage, coming so closely on the scenes of the morning.

Marcus sat on the upturned bucket used in carrying potatoes, and thought about these things. He knew now that Janet thought well of him. What was the use of trying to hide the fact. He now remembered many little scenes which were unmistakable, ever since he had met her in their camp on the plains; but strange as it may seem, the plain truth was that he had not thought of Janet as a prospective wife. She who had all the time

held that position was back in Hungerton. She still held it without a rival. His love for Alice was as strong as ever, and during all his strange experiences of the recent past, she had been the sole queen of his heart. He had not reasoned much on the matter, or he might have seen the utter foolishness of retaining any hope of Alice; but once or twice that little scene in his study, that last one with her, came to him and he heard himself say:

"You are mine, mine!"

It is a slow process to direct the channels of thought into entirely new regions, but Marcus began to think very kindly of his sister in the cause. Can a young man be entirely unmoved when he finds that a good, fair, young woman cares much for him?

"All right, Marcus, we're through," shouted John. "Let's go to the house."

Marcus nearly fell off the bucket. While he had been soliloquizing, John had planted and plowed until the work was finished, and he had said never a word to the man on the bucket.

CHAPTER VIII.

Sometimes as early as July the Wasatch Mountains are clothed in the Indian summer mist, thin and blue, making an idyl-land of the deep ravines, the towering crags, the pine-clad recesses, and the bold promontories. Such was that afternoon when Marcus, leading little Ida Dixon by the hand, walked up the hillside to get a better view. From the bold, rugged outlines of the rear mountains his eye followed their trend northward to where

they seemed to sink lower and lower, and the gray veiling became thicker, until at last the blue sky and the smoke-covered earth blended.

Little Ida ran hither and thither hunting for the few wild flowers which sometimes were found in the shaded protection of the sage-brush; but his eyes were on the mountains. Never before had nature so entered his soul or communed so plainly with him. The cabins of the settlement were hidden behind a hill, so that whichever way he looked, not a sign of human habitation or human workmanship could be seen. He was utterly alone, save the little child that toddled beside him.

Marcus was now well and quite strong. His face was no longer pale, but browned by the sharp wind and sun. He certainly had changed much since he had left Hungerton; and that difference was as marked as the difference between the gentle, grass-covered hills of his native state and the element-beaten mountains before him.

From out some lonely recess of the hills came the mournful notes of the wild pigeon. Who, being alone in the hills, and hearing those peculiarly penetrating cadences echoing from some unseen source, has not sat down on the ground, and felt as though he could stay there forever! And if, perchance the emotions within swelled and overflowed in tears, those tears were not wholly of joy, neither of sorrow, but of some strange fascinating emotion that stirred the soul to its depths!

Little Ida also sat on the ground, but she had no deeper concern than to arrange her flowers. They both sat on the hillside; the creek of cold water tumbled over its rocky bed in the ravine below. Presently a cow came

down the path along the stream, and following it came Janet Harmon. She carried her sunbonnet in her hand, regardless of the hot sun. Her dress was of many-times washed and patched calico; her shoes were ragged.

Marcus shouted to her from the hillside, and she paused and looked up.

"Wait a moment, Janet; I want to talk to you," he said.

"I must take the cow home."

"You're not in a great hurry, are you?"

"No—but—" and the girl looked down at her shoes and dress. Marcus saw the act.

"Then let the cow feed on that grass by the creek. I want to talk to somebody."

"You have Ida."

"Come, here's a green bank. Ida is busy with her flowers. Janet, don't be uneasy about how you look in your costume. We understand each other. We understand our conditions, and we know that we are the same beings whether we are in silks or broadcloths or in rags. What difference can a piece of cloth make in the intrinsic value of a man or a woman?"

"You are right," she said. "I am foolish to care about such things, but habit and life training are not easy to change."

Willows lined the bank of the creek, and they sat in their shade. Ida neglected her flowers and began weaving a necklace of wiregrass. Janet threw off her sunbonnet, and Marcus fanned his face with his old straw hat. The creek splashed musically by, and the cow was perfectly satisfied.

"What did you want to say to me?" Janet asked after the pause had been long enough.

"Oh, I just wanted to talk to someone. To think to one's self doesn't give the satisfaction that talking does. These rough mountains, the hazy air, and all this wildness seem to affect me today. Janet, this *is* wonderful, isn't it?"

"What, the scenery?"

"No; I mean our life here, or history for the past year. Think of it! I a college educated man, a respected minister and preacher, and now here! You, whose life seemed to be opening up so gloriously, to be surrounded by wealth and culture, ease and comfort, and now you are here also, living in a log house with a dirt roof and a mud floor, subsisting on the scantiest and coarsest of food, and thinking a rice pudding altogether too precious to eat yourself."

Remember, Janet's hair was red; her cheeks were of the same color now.

"I wonder if we have made a mistake, Janet."

She looked him in the face to see if he meant it. "I haven't," she said.

"No; neither of us has. This Gospel of Christ is worth it all. We have had many testimonies, and I can see more clearly every day the true meaning of life. Mormonism is in close touch with nature. We Mormons are pretty well nature's children."

"Yes, especially until we can get some factories started," said Janet, looking at a great rend in her shoe.

"I don't mean that at all," he laughed. "I mean that there is a strikingly close relationship between Mormonism and the known laws of nature; and also I see now

that we as God's children must learn a great many lessons in nature's school. In this school God is the Master. Whatever He provides is true religion, and true religion is Mormonism."

"I've thought of the same thing," said Janet, as she reached up and pulled down a willow. "Who would ever have dreamed two years ago that I should spin yarn, knit stockings, sew carpet rags, wash, bake, (though I haven't done much baking lately) scrub, drive cows, milk, churn, and delight in buttermilk—but now that's my life as though I had been born and raised to it."

The cow was out of sight now and Janet arose to look for it. Ida lay asleep on the grass. Marcus lifted her in his arms and they went down the road. Soon the settlement came into view. The sun was low in the west. A covered wagon left a trail of dust through the street. The voices of playing children came to them through the still afternoon air.

"You must remember," he said, "that we are pioneers. Here, if any place on the globe, is the primeval earth. We are the beginners. Everything around us is glaringly new. We find no ancient marks of ancestry, no shrines made sacred by centuries of human experiences. Here are no crumbling walls overgrown with ivy;"

"Here is nothing except that which we make with our own hands," she added.

"You put it exactly. If we want grass, we must sow it and then water it. If we want a tree, we must plant it. If we want a house, we must build it. But, Janet, we are empire founders. There will be some glory in that."

"After we are dead."

"Yes; certainly; perhaps it will be a long time after also; but ours is a quick age and who can tell even what one hundred years will bring!"

They turned into the street. The cow had already found the corral.

"Do you see that pile of logs?" asked Marcus, pointing to the side of the road. "Well, that's my lot, and I'm going to start on a house tomorrow."

"You have a good location," said she.

A horseman came galloping toward them. In his hurried ride he passed them before they recognized that it was a young man of the settlement. He reined in his horse, rode back and said:

"Have you heard the news?"

"What news, Ted?"

"Why, about the army. The President of the United States has send an army to Utah to straighten us out."

"Impossible—it must be a mistake."

"No; the soldiers are on the road already."

"But what have we done?"

"Done? Well, ask dad. He was in Nauvoo," and the young man put spurs to his horse and went on with his message.

"I must hurry home to mother," said Janet nervously; and when Marcus set little Ida down in the road and took Janet's hand to say goodnight, he looked into her troubled face.

"Do not fear, Janet;" he meant to speak some reassuring word but he could find nothing better than; "I shall come over tonight. Take care of mother."

CHAPTER IX.

The man whom Marcus had engaged to help him build his house came next morning with his ax and saw.

"I did not expect you, Brother Wood," said Marcus. "We'll have no need for houses if an army is coming to kill us off."

Brother Wood was a frontiersman. He had been through most of the experiences of the Church. He had built for himself two houses in Missouri, one in Illinois, and a number at the temporary stopping places across the plains; and now there were three which he had built in the settlement. He was an expert at constructing log houses, and he was not going to be stopped in his work because some soldiers were reported to be on the march to Utah.

"Never you fear, Brother King," said he as he ran his fingers through his gray beard. "I've seen lots of soldiers before, and I don't count much on these no how. I heard Brother Brigham say that if our enemies would leave us alone for ten years, we'd ask no odds of 'em. It's ten years ago since he said that. I think the Lord 'll tend to these fellers. Are you ready to go to work?"

"Well, yes; but you see I thought I'd wait and see how it turned out; but if you say so, I'm with you."

So that morning Marcus King's inheritance had a beginning. The stones for the corners were leveled, and the first round of logs laid on them. It was to be a two-roomed house, of good proportions with a "lean-to" at the back.

"I've been wonderin' all morning," said the master mechanic, "what you're wantin' with such a tony house as this, but now I see. You're goin' to git married."

"Oh no; you're mistaken, Brother Wood. I haven't been thinking of that at all."

"That's what all young fellers say; but you can't fool me. Janet's a mighty fine young woman, even if she has red hair."

"But you are really mistaken about that."

"Do you mean to tell me that you're not goin' to marry Janet Harmon?"

"I have no such intentions at present."

"Then all I can say to you is that you're actin' pretty foolish in sparkin' the gal;" and the speaker went on with his sawing.

"Is the impression out that Janet and I are keeping company, Brother Wood?"

"Oh, I don't know what other people think. But I've got ears and eyes, and I can tell you, young man, that if you don't marry Janet, there'll be a good heart broken—why don't you git married, anyway? There's no sense in a young feller like you goin' around single, when there's a dozen girls right here in this settlement just achin' to git you."

Marcus laughed at that. But after all he could not help thinking about the man's remarks about Janet. Of course he could marry her, he liked her well enough, but there was Alice, and his vow, or prophecy—whatever he might call it. It seemed to stand as a bar between him and any other woman. If he had been unwise towards Janet, it ought perhaps, to cease, and in the future he would be more careful. Janet had had trouble enough already, and so had he—he could sympathize with her.

* * * * *

History has dealt fully with the events in Utah dur-

ing that period when the troops of the United States marched into her peaceful settlements to put down an imaginary revolt, and this personal narrative will not to any extent dwell on these scenes. Some time a great poet will find ample material for his songs in the scenes of those days. Some day a great writer will find all he needs in the heart histories of those trying hours.

When the people had decided to defend themselves, there were hurried preparations in all the settlements north and south. Old muskets, swords, and pistols were brought out and cleaned. Those who had any knowledge of military tactics drilled the awkward squads of farmers. Marcus would have gone to Echo canyon, but it was decided that John Dixon would be better able to stand the hardships of the winter, so Marcus stayed at home. It is well known how the troops wintered in the bleak mountains, and that in the spring they came marching into Salt Lake valley; how when they entered the villages they found them deserted; and how, after quartering in the territory for some time, they marched back again to the more bloody fields of the South.

It was no great trial to Marcus to move south. It was far worse for some who had large families, and who had had only a short rest, as it were, from their wanderings. Janet's mother cried when she left her little cabin.

"I thought I might have laid my bones down in peace," she sobbed.

But there was no great hardship in that excursion south,and when they all came back again in July and began to occupy their homes and work as usual,many looked upon it as a little out that had done them good. With new energy they digged and built, planted and harvested.

God smiled in favor upon them, and they prospered in the land as never before.

* * * * * * *

The settlement where Marcus King located soon extended its borders and received the name of Hemla. Other streets were added to the east and to the west of the main one; then cross streets were surveyed, cutting the place into square blocks. New settlers kept coming in, and more land was broken and planted. The water ditches were enlarged and extended. Then a store was built where general merchandise was to be had, hauled from the Missouri River by wagons. Prices were high, it may be believed.

The winter following the move, Marcus taught school in Hemla. Two departments were organized. One was a primary, over which Janet Harmon presided; the more advanced was in charge of Marcus. Marcus invited all who desired to attend, and many married people took advantage of the opportunity to add to their limited store of book learning. In the evening he taught an advanced class. This work, and especially the evening classes, brought Marcus somewhat back to his former atmosphere, with the great difference in his favor of knowing that what he was teaching was the truth, and having the blessed assurance of a satisfied conscience, and of doing a noble work in the community. The lack of books and the scarcity of aids in teaching taxed the instructors to the utmost, but when spring came, and all who could work must, all agreed that the winter had been spent most profitably. Janet, however, continued to meet with her flock of children and give them a daily lesson on the blackboard in the school house.

One Sunday morning in early May, the people of Hemla were unusually active. President Brigham Young and some of the leading brethren were coming to hold meeting that day. It was a habit of the great leader to travel from settlement to settlement among the people, setting the Church in order, organizing quorums, laying out townsites, selecting sites for tabernacles and temples, and planning irrigation canals. His visits were always hailed with delight, and early that morning the children of Hemla had been to the hills to gather the few early flowers with which to decorate themselves. The old bowery from last year had been repaired the day before.

At nine o'clock the president's carriage was seen coming down the road, and soon the children took their position in lines on each side of the street. As he rode through, he smiled and bowed to them, and they waved their flowers. The people soon began to gather under the bowery by the side of the meeting house. The plank benches were hard and without any backs, but many of the older people came early to get a seat in front.

Marcus was only slightly acquainted with the president, but as Brother Brigham walked up to the stand he stopped and chatted with the young man for a few moments. Then they all sang:

"O ye mountains high,
Where the clear blue sky
Arches over the vales of the free."

The president talked to them about the recent trials which the Church had been called to pass through; said that it had already proved a great blessing to them; they could now look forward to a steady growth both in temporal and spiritual affairs; and gave much good advice.

Some other speakers followed and the meeting closed for noon.

In the afternoon the president occupied nearly all the time.

Marcus had never heard such a sermon. It was not a rhetorically or logically arranged sermon, but it thrilled him nevertheless. He got a striking example of one who speaks, not as the Pharisees, but as one having authority. Towards its close the president said: "Now, my brethren and sisters, this branch has been in a somewhat disorganized condition; and as it is, you are laboring under disadvantages. You are now large enough to have a full ward organization, and we intend this afternoon to present to you the name of a man to be your bishop. He can then choose his counselors, and they can complete the organization. Brother Thomas has been presiding temporarilly, and he has done his duty as far as I can find out. My mind has been free and open to the suggestions of the Spirit as to whom I should name as your bishop. Until I walked up to this stand this afternoon I was in doubt, but now I know."

At such news, the congregation naturally became extremely attentive and expectant. Some had thought that a bishop would be presented to the meeting, but whom the man would be they could not tell. Half a dozen names had been mentioned, and among them Elder Thomas, who had presided thus far; but he was a very "slow" man, and it was doubtful if he would be named.

"Brother Marcus King," said the president," will you please come to the stand?"

There was a murmur of voices as Marcus walked up to the platform. Marcus himself had no clear idea of what was coming.

"This is the man the Spirit has told me to name as your bishop. Brother King, tell us what you think of it;" and the president sat down, leaving Marcus to face the meeting. The audience became a blur to him. His head seemed to reel for an instant. The suddenness of the situation had nearly stunned him. He stepped up to the table and said:

"Brethren and sisters, this is as great a surprise to me as it is to you. My own feelings cry 'no, no,' but duty tells me I have no right to say that. I am willing to try anything that God or His servants may call me to, with the help of the Lord. Amen."

He sat down, and the president arose.

"All who favor Brother King as your bishop and will support him with your faith, your prayers, and your works, make it manifest by raising the right hand."

Every hand went up.

"And now," continued the president, "there is another thing. I understand that Brother King is not a married man. It is hardly the proper thing for your bishop to set you such a bad example; and Brother King," turning around to him, "I charge you to get a wife, or two if you like, as soon as possible."

At the close of the meeting, as friends shook his hand, Marcus saw Janet glide quietly past him and away before he could reach her.

CHAPTER X.

While at school Marcus remembered having read the saying of Paul to Timothy, that "if a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work." He had asso-

ciated the passage with his knowledge of bishops as he saw them in the various denominations. Then he had agreed with Paul. His highest ambition would certainly be reached, thought he, if he ever attained to that lofty position. But now he was a bishop, a real bishop in the Church of Christ. And how different it was to what his idea had been! He was simply the ecclesiastical head of possibly a hundred souls, poor and struggling in a new country to make a living; and he was one of them, working daily in the fields for his own support.

Though the new bishop was young, yet he was well liked by all. His counselors were much older than he, and so all classes were satisfied with the arrangement. Marcus took hold of his office with a vim, and soon had everything in the ward in good working order. Of course a few objected to some of his "new-fangled ways" as they called them, and said that he was too new from the sectarian pulpit; but these grumblers were not many.

Naturally, there was much talk of what Brother Brigham had said to Marcus about his getting married. Many were the jokes at his expense, but he laughed them all away. Of course, he meant to marry, he said, but he must be given time to think about such a serious matter.

Though he would say it in a jocular way, he thought about it earnestly enough; and Alice was in his mind all the time. During the "Echo Canyon War" the mails had been very irregular, and news from Hungerton had been scarce. He had written but one letter to Alice, but that had never been answered. She might never have received it, however, and that spring—it was after he had become bishop—he had written her again, and sent her some new Mormon literature. In his last letter to his mother he

had asked about Alice, but he heard nothing from her through that source, Alice having left Mrs. King some time during the winter.

It was middle of the summer before Marcus received more letters from the East. One was from his mother, but none from Alice. His mother had been very sick, was quite weak at that writing, and she told him not to be surprised if she wrote no more to him. "As regards Alice Merton," she wrote, "since she left Hungerton I have not heard much from her. She has lost all interest in me, I fear. You remember I told you of her father's financial failures, and how his business here has been closed. They are now living on their farm some distance from town; but, as I said, I hear scarcely anything from them. The last time I saw Alice she was driving in that old one-horse buggy of theirs, and there was a young fellow with her. It is rumored that they are quite intimate. Well, Alice is getting over her girl days, and I can not blame her for getting married if she has a good offer; but I had such hopes, Marcus—Alice is such a good girl—but there, what's the use of my writing of such matters. You no doubt care very little for her now, and there are plenty of girls in your town any one of whom would gladly marry the new bishop."

On the whole, it was a depressing letter. Marcus worried considerably over its contents both as regards his mother and Alice. He might have to give up Alice, after all. At least, he could see no way by which she would ever become his wife, unless the hand of Providence overruled in a miraculous manner; but that she should be the wife of another hurt him sadly, and he obtained no peace

of mind on that matter until he had gone to the All-wise and All-merciful and poured out his heart to Him.

Meanwhile, Janet was in Salt Lake City. She had gone there directly after Marcus had been made Bishop, and had visited Hemla but a few times since. Marcus had neglected Janet. Being so occupied with his new duties, he had thought little about her. Now he realized that he had been negligent, and it became all the more glaring when considered with the fact that Janet had been so devoted to him. If he must settled down to a married life, he knew of none better suited to him than Janet. He did not try to deceive himself. He did not love Janet Harmon as he loved Alice Merton; but he thought a great deal of her, that was certain.

And now rumors came to him about Janet in the city: She "kept company" with a man who was not doing right, but was quarreling with the authorities of the Church. Marcus tried to see her on a number of his trips to the city, but he had failed. He did not place much reliance in this talk, as he knew Janet and her opinions too well to suspect such things of her.

One evening Marcus called on Sister Harmon to inquire about Janet. The sister was knitting in the open doorway, at the same time watching the light fade from the western sky. She had aged much in the few years she had been in the West, and lately her health was failing. It certainly seemed likely that she soon would have her wish fulfilled as regards laying down her bones in Zion.

Marcus would not take the chair which she had vacated for him, but he sat down on a bench by the wall. The little room was one of the neatest that the Bishop

ever went into in that settlement. With the extreme scarcity of anything that could be used to adorn or make comfort, it was a wonder that such a room could be made. Out of the commonest things Janet's skillful fingers had made neat ornaments. The clay floor had recently been hidden by one of sawn boards, and little strips of home-made carpet covered the boards not made white by scrubbing. The cleanest and freshest white-wash covered the walls, where were hung a few cheap prints with frames of oak and autumn leaves. Shelves were lined with scalloped paper. In the little window behind the tiny panes of glass stood a row of cans filled with flowers: two or three geraniums, some pinks, and a few wild flowers. Marcus went up to them and pulled a small red blossom.

"And so Janet doesn't come home often now?" said he.

"No; she doesn't care to leave her place. And you know, Brother King, a girl of Janet's nature likes a little more society than there is here in Hemla."

"Yes; I suppose so; but what about that rumor? Has she found a young man that cares for her?"

"Yes; I think she has. There's no use denying that; at least he seems to think a great deal of her."

"And does she like him?"

"Well now, Brother King, I can't say. She's turned so strange lately that I can't understand the girl. I believe that she thinks more of you yet than of anybody else."

The needles stopped their busy click, and the old sister looked steadily at him with a smile. Marcus was trying to fasten to his jacket the flower he had picked.

"I'm sorry, Sister Harmon—that is, I suppose I haven't treated Janet quite right."

"No; I don't think you have."

"But you know my story, don't you? Janet does, and I thought you would understand."

"Yes; Janet told me about your young lady that wouldn't have you after you became a Mormon. Janet was in the same fix—but bygones are bygones with her."

Marcus knew, however, that there was a difference in their cases.

"Where is Janet staying now? I'm going to town tomorrow and I should like to see her?"

Sister Harmon went to the shelf and brought down a letter from which she took a slip of paper. A photograph also fell to the floor.

"Oh yes; here's his picture," she said as she handed it to him.

The face was a dear one to Marcus King. It was his old friend who had brought him the Gospel, Elder Robert James.

"Do you know him?" she asked.

"Yes; he preached the Gospel to me in Hungerton.'

"Indeed! Well, now, that's interesting; but have you heard that he is on the back track, as they say?"

"Yes; I've heard it, but I can hardly believe it of him. I must see him when I go to town. I haven't heard from him for a long time, and had no idea he was in Salt Lake."

Marcus brought away with him a package for Janet from her mother, and a sharp pain in his heart for himself. He lost no time in getting an early start for the city next morning.

He found Elder James at work on his farm on the outskirts of the city, and when he took his hand and

looked into his face, Marcus found that there was some truth in the rumor he had heard. The man spoke in a confused way, and his actions displayed a nervousness not natural to him. Of course he was pleased to see Marcus.

"I'll unhitch and we'll go to the house. Sister Harmon is my housekeeper—you know Janet Harmon, I believe?"

"We crossed the plains together, that is, part way, and she has lived in Hemla."

"Yes; she has told me of you. You see, I lost my wife two years ago, and I must have someone to look after my two children. Janet does it splendidly. She's a fine woman."

The horses were unhitched from the plow, and they made for the stable, the two men following.

"So this is your farm?" asked Marcus. "You've got a fine piece of land here."

"Yes; it's a pretty good farm, but I've sold it."

"Is that so?"

"Yes; I'm going East in the spring. I've an offer of a good position back in my native state, and I think I'd better go. I'm not wanted here any longer."

"Why, what's the matter, Brother James?"

"I'm finding too much fault, that's all. You haven't heard, perhaps, but the fact is that I am already as good as an outcast here. Things are not run right to my notion, and because I point it out, I am ostracized."

"But, dear brother, the Gospel is the same, isn't it?"

"Yes; I don't deny that, but Brigham is wrong."

They came to the house, where they met Janet coming from the cellar with a pan of milk. At sight of Mar-

cus she nearly dropped it. "Look out," he said, "If I'm to have any of that for dinner."

She was surprised, and also a little uneasy, Marcus thought. However, she busied herself with getting dinner, and finding time once in a while to ask about matters in Hemla.

At the table they asked and answered questions for some time regarding their doings since they had parted in Iowa City. This led on to their experiences in and around Hungerton, and Elder James asked about many of his friends, if Marcus had any news from them. The old-time light came into his eyes, and the old-time interest awakened when these missionary reminiscences were indulged in; and Marcus began to doubt his first conclusions.

"I live with John and Eliza Dixon in Hemla. They are still true to the faith as you taught it to them, Robert. Why don't you come out and see them?"

"Well, I have often thought I would go out and see you all, but this trouble of mine has prevented me. I didn't think you would care to see me."

"I will always be glad to see you, Robert. I can never forget what I owe you. I am trying to live up to the principles you taught me also. I know they are true —and you know it, too."

Robert's hand trembled as he pushed his hair from his forehead, and wiped away the dampness.

"Yes," he said in a low, tremulous voice; "I know they are true. I don't deny them, Marcus, and I hope I never shall. The principles are all right, but—" and here he raised his voice, "the authorities are wrong."

"I shall not try to show you the fallacy of that posi-

tion. It seems altogether too strange for *me* to be *your* teacher."

"Oh, that's all right. You're a Bishop, you know, You stand in with Brigham and are all right."

Marcus did not desire to quarrel with his old friend. He was too much pained for that. So they parted with a good spirit, and Marcus had him promise that he would visit his friends in Hemla the next Sunday.

Janet had said but little during the taik. The children came rushing in to get their dinner, and she busied herself with them.

"You'll come, too, Janet," said Marcus.

"I don't know—I'd like to see Mother, but—"

"Let there be no 'buts' Janet. You must promise me to come. I want you to come, Janet."

"Then I'll be there," she said. And her eyes followed him through the gate and up the road.

CHAPTER XI.

The next Saturday Bishop King was irrigating corn when he saw a passing team stop at Harmon's, and Janet alight. He had doubted her coming at all, but here she was, a day ahead.

That evening Marcus called. He smiled to himself as he brushed his coat, and put on his best tie, before going. It had been such a long time since he had done any "dressing" to call on the ladies that the act now had a certain charm in it.

Janet must have expected him. She was dressed better than he had ever seen her, and she reminded him

of the first sight he had of her on the plains. Save for a sad expression that seemed to have made itself permanent in her face, she showed her peculiar beauty to advantage that evening. A little pang akin to jealousy shot through his breast.

Janet had brought a few simple luxuries from the city, and mother and daughter were enjoying them at the table.

"You're just in time," exclaimed the mother. "There's just a taste of this cake left for you."

"We're fast getting back to old conditions," said he, "when we can have sugar in our cake. This was sweetened with sugar, wasn't it, Janet?"

Janet nodded.

"Yes; and when we can dress like that," said the mother, pointing to Janet.

"Now, Mother, you know that this is the cheapest kind of stuff."

"It must be in the making," said Marcus, "for I assure you, it looks pretty fine."

"I'm going to get some cooler milk," said the girl, as she went to the cellar with a tin pail.

"Brother James will be here tomorrow, won't he?" Marcus asked, when she returned.

"Yes; he and the children."

Sister Harmon, good old scheming soul, said she had an errand at a neighbor's. Janet pleaded to go instead, but she was ordered to stay and entertain her company.

"The Bishop is your company, mama, not mine." The words leaped from her as though she could not control them. Then she straightway apologized.

"All right, mother, go on. I'll do my best. You'll forgive me, won't you, Brother King?"

"I forgive all men—likewise all women," he answered, "in hopes that I also shall be forgiven of them."

The door was open, and the moon shone in on the floor. A cool breeze came from the mountains, and blew out like a sail the little white curtain at the window. Marcus drew his chair into the draught. Janet cleared the table.

"How long have you iived with Brother James?" he asked.

"Just this summer."

"And how long has he been feeling as he does?"

"I don't know. He says very little to me about such things. I was somewhat surprised myself at what he said to you the other day."

"You don't know how sorry I am when I see a man like Brother James fall into the dark. Why, he has been on a mission, preached the Gospel to hundreds, and done a vast amount of good; and after it all to apostatize! I don't understand it. Now, if it had been you or me, Janet, who haven't done much for the Church, and who are quite new, it wouldn't have been so surprising; but Brother James—well, its awful."

"I did not think it was that bad. He's been very kind to me."

"Janet, do you know what rumor has it about you?"

"No; what rumor?" She stood leaning against the open door. The moonlight streamed through her hair, making a peculiarly beautiful effect.

"Why, that you and Brother James are keeping company."

"And what if we are? Whose business is it? She stood up erect against the door. Marcus leaned across the cleared table and looked at her. He had never seen her so charming.

"Janet, I did not mean to offend you by repeating gossip," he said quietly. "For my own knowledge I wanted to know."

She stood as if rigid. Marcus could hear that she breathed hard, but she said nothing.

"I wanted the information, Janet, so that I would know how to act. I do not wish to be unfair or unmanly. If you have promised to marry Brother James, then I'll say no more."

It was a bold move he made, but he might as well out with it.

"I've not promised to marry Brother James."

"Thank you for telling me. Won't you sit down here, Janet, while I talk to you."

She answered not, she did not move. So Marcus arose and stood on the other side of the open door, quite close to her. A field of ripening wheat was just outside, but its countless ears would never hear. However, they nodded back and forth towards each other in the moonlight as if they were whispering a secret tale of love.

"Janet, you can't imagine the responsibility there is in being Bishop even in such a small place as this. I've been alone in the work long enough, and if I can get some one to help me, it will be better."

"You can get ten girls to marry you, if that is what you mean," she said with an effort.

"But I don't want ten, I want but one—"

"And she is in Hungerton. You are in a fix, Bishop." There was a sneer in her tone this time.

Marcus walked back to the chair. He was silenced. She had turned on him, she was playing with him, and he knew now that he loved her. He could not say anything to her, and she stood there looking—staring out into the fields.

"Well, Janet," he said at last, "I see that it is useless to say anything further to you tonight." He pushed the chair away and reached for his hat. "Perhaps, tomorrow —but Brother James will be here then and there is no telling—oh Janet, why do you despise me? what have I done that you should hate me?"

The girl walked waveringly to the chair, leaned her head on the table, and burst into loud sobs. Marcus stood hat in hand as if helpless. Then he went to her, and as a father would place his hand on the head of a child, he placed his on the bowed head. He drew another chair up to her, and sat there until her sobs grew less violent. Then he gently took her hand, and lifted her head from the table. All her passion had vanished, and she yielded to each pressure of his hand.

"I did not mean to be hard," she said at last, "but I thought you never have cared for me, and now your talk puts the devil into my heart. Forgive me, Marcus."

"I have nothing to forgive, but you have much. I have ill-treated you. I have neglected you, but it shall be so no longer. Do you think you can forgive me, and learn to love me?"

"I love you now, Marcus." She only whispered it, but he heard it plainly, and he pressed her head onto his shoulder, while her soft, warm hand clasped his in a firm

grasp. The breeze sank to a zephyr. The moon sailed behind a cloud. Then he kissed her, and what were words after that?

"Marcus," she said, "now I must talk. Mother will be here presently, and I don't care for her to see my swollen eyes. Let us walk up and down outside!"

So Marcus slipped her arm into his and they walked down the road bordering the wheat field and the hay meadow.

"Marcus, you haven't *said* that you love me."

"Then I will say it now."

"Hush! but we may take it for granted that you care a little for me. Still—now don't deny it, Marcus—you think more of Alice Merton."

"But that is in the past. It is useless to talk about it."

"Perhaps, and perhaps not. However, let us understand each other, let us have no secrets between us. I have told you mine."

"And you don't care for Robert James?"

"Not a bit. I never did. I cared for you only, and I shall thank God that tonight He has answered my prayers."

How could Marcus have been so blind to such a sublime love!

"Now listen to me,"—and she pinched his arm. "I'm not going to marry you just yet."

"Well, why not? Hasn't my house stood vacant long enough?"

"I'm going to give you a chance to marry Alice first."

"But my dear Janet, you can't give me that chance."

"Hush, let me tell you. We can wait and see. We know not what time will bring. We must give Alice a chance. She loves you, and you love her—you love her more than you love me. I'm used to that thought now, so it doesn't hurt me. You can marry Alice first, I'm willing. It is her right. I will come in afterwards and be a help to you both."

"My dear girl, I bless you for your words. I had not thought it possible for a woman to say them as you have. I do love Alice, and I think I always shall; but remember, that does not hinder me from loving you, yea, now a hundred fold more than ever."

"I know it, Marcus, I know it; you love me of course, but not as you love Alice; and it's all right. It's not to be expected otherwise. We must give Alice another chance. If you marry me first, it would break Alice's heart. I can come in second, you know. That will be easier for her, when she understands it."

"Yes; but she never will understand, I fear."

"She may, Marcus. That's in God's hands. We must give her another chance anyway. Marcus, I had a letter from her last winter."

"You?"

"Yes; I've never told you before because I was jealous. She asked about you. Oh, it was such a beautiful letter, and full of love for you. I believe she is a good girl, and I have not treated her right because I have not answered it yet."

"You surprise me. How could she have gotten your address? She has never answered any of my letters."

"I suppose she got it through Brother Dixon, or

perhaps through Robert James. He has written back, I understand."

It was getting late. The mother was looking out of the door for them, and they walked up to her arm in arm.

"It's all right, mother," said Marcus, "Janet and I have come to an understanding at last, and we want your sanction and blessing."

"And you may have both," she said, and continued about now being able to lay down her bones in peace, which remark Marcus just made out as he leaped over the fence on a short cut home.

CHAPTER 12.

It was a pleasant party that assembled at John Dixon's the next day. There were John and his wife, Sister Harmon and Janet, Robert James and the two children, and the Bishop of Hemla, with little Ida alternately on his arm and knee.

There are no more pleasing associations than those formed in the mission field. Somehow that "first love" for the Gospel is awakened and renewed by meeting friends whom one has learned to know and love while preaching the Gospel. What good times to be recalled! What outpourings of the Spirit to be remembered! What experiences with opposing forces to be narrated again! And so that little party at Dixon's were all day; between

meetings, talking of old times, and rejoicing in each other's company.

It was not until towards evening that Robert James showed his disposition to find fault, and them he began in a manner that jarred on the Bishop's feelings. Marcus did not care to bring on any discussion and so mar the good spirit of the company; but he could not quietly hear slandered those whom he considered apostles and prophets, and although not without their faults, still good men. So he said to his friend Robert in the hearing of all:

"Brother James, I'm surprised at you I'm surprised that you should say such things. You are a reasonable man, and understand the philosophy of the Gospel. Tell me how it is that the leaders, the heads of the true Church, can be in the wrong, and still that Church grow and prosper, and be in the right? Can the head be sick without the body knowing it?"

"The body does know it."

"An individual now and then thinks so; not the Church as a whole."

"Well, I think I know what I'm talking about. I know more about Brigham Young than you do."

"You may do that. When I know that he stands at the head of the Church of Christ on the earth, I do not care to know all his faults and misdoings, for of course he is not perfect, being a mortal like the rest of us. Knowing the Gospel to be true, I can be satisfied with whomsoever God pleases to put at the head. I can reason no other way. I can not believe that an impure fountain can bring forth pure waters."

"I'm not going to argue with you, Marcus, on that point."

"I didn't say that to you, when you came to Hungerton. I reasoned with you, and tried to hold my point, too; but when I saw that I was beaten, I gave in, didn't I?"

"Yes; but really I see no use in talking about it. What's done can't be undone. I've sold my place and am going East. Perhaps they will cut me off the Church before I go. Then I'll be out of it, and will get away from Mormonism for a while. Come, children, let's be going. I'm sorry that I should disappoint you so, Marcus, but I can't help it. You keep on, and you'll be all right."

He tried to laugh, a forced, sickly laugh, as he prepared to go. The others looked on in silence. Marcus arose and stood by the table, his eyes blazing.

"Robert, wait a moment. Once you taught me the eternal truth, and now I am going to tell it to you. I want you to remember that I have borne my testimony to you. You said you would get away from Mormonism. Robert James, I tell you solemnly *you can not get away from Mormonism,* you can not get outside of it. Do what you will, go where you may, eternal truth will be there—and that is Mormonism. Take the wings of the morning and fly to the uttermost parts of the universe, and there is God and His children—that is Mormonism. In life or in death Mormonism will meet you and remind you of its truth. You might as well try to run away from your innermost soul as to escape from Mormonism. You might as well try to get outside of time and space as to get outside of Mormonism. You can't do it, Brother James, you can't do it."

"'Tis the last and the first,
For the limits of time it steps o'er;
Though the heavens depart, and the earth's fountains burst,'
Truth, the sum of existence, will weather the worst,
Eternal, unchanged, evermore'—

and that is Mormonism!"

They had all arisen. No one spoke, but Robert James put on his hat, took a child by each hand, and walked away. He went straight to where his horses were feeding by his wagon, and taking no heed of the pleadings to remain, he hitched up and drove off to town. The last that was heard of them in the dark was the children's crying.

* * * * * *

Janet went to the city, had a talk with Robert James, and then came back to Hemla. She and Marcus were much together, and now it was generally conceded that the Bishop would get a wife. However, weeks went by and the golden autumn came, and still there was no change.

"You are not to be in a hurry, Marcus, about my setting the date," said she; "you'll grant me that."

"Take your own time, my dear; but our good people, the neighbors, are getting impatient," he answered.

Meanwhile, Janet had answered Alice's letter, and in due time of the stage coach she received an answer. It was a strange letter.

Expressing, as the writer did, strong condemnation, she, at the same time, could not hide her love for Marcus. Janet could read that plainly between the lines. Janet answered it at once, and in her letter she told Alice the facts as regarding Marcus and as regards herself. She was

open with her, laying bare her soul to the unknown girl. Janet thought it was her duty to do so. She meant to do what was right by Alice Merton, and give her the one chance more. She had studied it all out during her long absence from Hemla, when she had been greatly in doubt whether Marcus had any love for her. She had thought of that first love of hers, which had been so easily changed. As she looked back upon it, she thanked God that it had gone no further than it had. When she thought of Marcus, with his high ideals, his nobility of character, and his manhood, how low in the scale that other man sank! But —but she was not sure of Marcus; far from it. Looking back on their acquaintance, she could find nothing in him that would indicate more than a deep respect for her. His mind had been so filled with Alice that there had been no room for her. At first she resented it, and vowed that she would never again show her heart to Marcus, as she had done on some occasions. But the more she thought and prayed about it, the clearer became her right position toward herself and them. Envy left her, resentment found no place within her heart. It was all shown to her so clearly. Her duty was plain. There was sacrifice in it, but beyond it all there was peace and joy, and a glory which God gave her a glimpse of. With all this in her soul she had penned that last letter to Alice, and now she would wait for an answer. It would take weeks, perhaps months, but wait she would before she would give her hand to Marcus King. And Marcus also waited patiently.

In those early days, the one house, sometimes rude, answered for meetinghouse, schoolhouse, amusement hall— a place for all kinds of public gatherings. Marcus had his ideals even in these wild surroundings, and he did not

lose sight of them. That fall, when the harvesting was over, he began the movement to build that new meeting-house. *That* meetinghouse? Yes, it was the only one of its kind in the valley for a long time, and many of the old settles can yet tell of that wonderful structure.

Marcus talked the project up well before beginning, and the majority of the people were heartily in favor of his plans. A few thought the schoolhouse good enough, and said the Bishop was going back to his old sectarian notions of fine churches. A building committee was appointed, of which Marcus was chairman. He was also the architect of the new house, while Brother Wood was the foreman of the work.

"We fix up the best we know now," Marcus preached, "when we invite our friends to see us. Let us not discriminate against the Lord. Every Sabbath at least we invite the Lord to meet with us, and what kind of a reception room do we provide for Him? Well, you all know what condition our room is often in on a Sunday after a dance. There can be nothing too good for the Lord or His Spirit. We try to make our temples the most beautiful buildings that the human hand can construct, in proof of this. I have heard some complaints about this matter. One brother said that it was sectarian, and smattered of the pride of the world. I don't think so. The children of this world are often wiser than the children of light. They make their places of worship beautiful and attractive, that people may be drawn to them and take a delight in coming. Why shouldn't we do the same? We, out here in the West, must 'rough it' all the week. We come in close contact with mother earth, and her stains are upon us. We learn to live with the soil and forget to

look up to the beautiful blue sky. Now, I think that once in a while we should get away from our life of drudgery, and soar, as it were, in the beauties of heaven. I think we should have a place into which we might enter, and its very atmosphere draw our minds to God."

So the work was begun. The logs came from the canyon, and the hewers cut them smooth on both sides. A site was selected which could be irrigated, and a foundation was laid. Marcus had plenty of skilled laborers who were glad to thus renew their acquaintance with their old trades. Each took a pride in doing his best. There was a scarcity of material, but it was a wonder to see the ingenuity that was exhibited to overcome difficulties.

The sisters were not idle. With Janet at their head, they gathered a great many rags, which they sewed and weaved into beautiful strips of carpet. These were for the stand and aisles, and perhaps the whole floor if they could get enough. Then there were some coverings for the windows, something in the nature of curtains or blinds to keep out the hot summer sun. There was much planning before anything satisfactory was devised. Then Janet said there must be some decorations for the walls, and old trunks were ransacked for suitable pictures. These were put into all sorts of crude but artistic frames.

The whole of Hemla was aroused. Every man, woman, and child had or wanted something to do with the building of the new meetinghouse. This was true even of the grumblers. As the walls slowly arose, the plasterer was scheming and experimenting to get the best plaster out of the material he could procure. The painters and dec-

orators, and there was an artist among them, also were hard at work mixing unheard of pigments and experimenting with their own rooms with effects ofttimes the most startling.

As heads of the two divisions, Marcus and Janet met and schemed. Marcus had drawn quite elaborate plans which he explained to Janet one afternoon.

"In the spring we shall try to get some shrubbery," said he. "I have already sent after some grass seed which I intend to plant this fall. Then here we shall have a row of trees—of poplars, box elders, locusts, and others that we can get. Then I'm going to write back to Hungerton to the old janitor there and ask him to send me some roots of that ivy which nearly buries the church. That I will plant here on each side of the vestibule, and make some trellis work for it to climb upon."

They leaned over the table and examined the drawings, their heads being close together.

"Where are your flower beds?" she asked.

"Well, I hardly dared go that far."

"Why not? Flowers are as easy to raise as trees or grass. I want some flowers. A big boquet must be on the stand every Sunday morning."

"I'm no florist, but you are, so here goes." Whereupon some circles and diamonds were drawn upon the paper.

"And if any teams are hitched close by to injure all this, there'll be a row!"

"That's all provided for," laughed Marcus. "See here across the street we are to plant a double row of trees for the teams."

"I like this," said Janet. "You know this is *doing*

something. We're shaping the future, we're creating, we're pioneers."

"I've told you that before, haven't I?"

They were in reality two happy people.

Then Janet reminded Marcus of the wildness of life among the young people, and their lack of gentle manners. Marcus was aware of it well enough, but was at a loss to know how to check it. So, together they talked it over and decided that they would take a more active part in the amusements of the young people, in fact, be the leaders, and show them by example rather than by precept how to act.

They went about their task quietly, but soon there was a marked change. In the dance Marcus and Janet were the first and leading couple. They made themselves as prominent as they could, and all had to look at the graceful couple and unconsciously follow them.

In all this Marcus and Janet put their whole soul. It was a labor worthy of any talent.

Then came October, and the conference. A jolly party drove in to the city to attend. The splendid meetings were greatly enjoyed. On the afternoon of the last day the list of missionaries called to the world was read. Among those called to preach the Gospel to the United States was the name of Marcus King.

Marcus immediately answered the call. He had very little preparation to make. He called together his counselors and some of the leading brethren and laid before them his plans for finishing the new meetinghouse, and they said that his ideas should be carried out as far as possible. John Dixon would look after his personal affairs.

He asked Janet if she had fixed the date for their marriage yet, and she said she had not.

"I know people will talk," she explained, "and wonder why we do not get married before you leave, but we will have to stand that. Now, more than ever, that date must be uncertain. You will visit Hungerton, and see Alice; meanwhile I will wait and see how things turn out."

"Janet," said he, "I appreciate your motives. I had not thought it possible for woman to sacrifice herself for woman as you are doing."

"In the end there will be a greater blessing," said she, "so there really is no sacrifice."

"Yes; with the light you have on the subject of God's eternal providences, it may be possible. To the women in the world it would not be. Janet, you are dearer than ever to me for what you say, because it is true that I love Alice, and because I do want to see her again. Now that's a paradox. You ought to be angry at that, to spurn me, or go away with a broken heart; but you do neither. You understand that it is possible for me to love you both."

But her heart was full, and she did not answer. A tear slowly trickled down her cheek, which Marcus kissed away.

CHAPTER XIII.

In a few days Marcus was ready. The missionary company went with some travelers going East. The weather continued to be fair, and good time was made. As he traversed nearly the same ground over which he had traveled with his hand-cart, Marcus could not help

but think of that terrible trial, and then of the experience which had been crowded into the past three years of his life. And here he was again, a preacher of the Gospel, not with a salary, but traveling without purse and scrip as the apostles of old.

Winter had set in before they reached the railroad, but there was no suffering; then, drawn by the iron steed, they soon reached their destination.

Marcus labored for some time in and around the city of St. Louis. Here he found a number of old-time friends, some of whom received him kindly and others did not. Marcus entered into his work with keen interest. That he represented an unpopular people, and preached an unpopular doctrine which brought upon him much opposition, only spurred him on and gave life and zeal to his labors.

One day he found a college chum, one who had also entered the ministry and was now the popular pastor of a large church in the city. His friend was surprised to see him, and doubly astonished when he learned some of his history. He invited Marcus to call on him the next evening, which invitation was promptly accepted.

Marcus had walked all day and was tired and hungry when he made his way to his friend's house. At his knock a servant girl showed him in and took his hat and overcoat. He had no rubbers. so he wiped his feet well on the rug before entering. The parlor was warm and well-lighted, and Marcus sank into the cushions of an arm-chair with an old-time abandon to ease and comfort.

That must have been a dream, that trip out in the wilds of the Rocky Mountains among the Mormons! Was he not sitting in his own cozy parlor at Hungerton? His

mother would soon call him to dinner. He could hear the clatter of dishes, and the delicious odor of cooking viands came through the opening and closing doors. Yes, it must have been all a dream: the hard, long travel across the plains; the sleeping and eating on the ground; the living in log houses; the poor, coarse food; the wild, dry, desert West, pregnant with the smell of alkali and sage-brush; the hot sun; the cloudless sky; the Mormons and all his supposed friends; there was Janet busy with the worked covering which she said was to be for the pulpit; she leaned over her work, the long braids of dark red hair hanging over her shoulders; her mother moved quietly about in that little white-washed room; the plowing and the planting; the irrigating and the harvesting; the haying; the digging of potatoes that made the hands rough and sore; the long, hard day's work in the hot sun—yes; what a wonderful dream it had all been!

"Good evening, Marcus," said his friend, stepping in, "I see you've come."

Marcus crossed his knees again; he imagined for an instant that his warm slipper was dangling on the end of his foot, but in reality he saw nothing but a wet, much-mended shoe.

"You'll excuse me for keeping you waiting so long," said the parson.

"Oh," I am quite at ease, you see. You have it quite comfortable here."

"Well, not as I wish. The salary doesn't allow much yet; but I am hoping to get a raise soon, and then I expect to fix up as I should like. If it's a fair question, how much do you get? I understand you are traveling in the interest of the Mormon Church?"

"Well, now," said Marcus, smiling, "I don't know yet, as the account is kept by the recording angel; but I hope I shall have my share when I get to heaven. We get no salary here."

Marcus saw that the pastor doubted his word, so he said no more on that subject but the talk soon led on to old times, and what Marcus had seen in the West. Then dinner was announced, of which the hungry missionary was heartily glad. His friend introduced him to his wife, and the three sat down to a dinner which again reminded Marcus of bygone days.

His friends could not understand Marcus. That he could forsake his all and cast his lot with the Mormons was beyond belief. They did not say as much in words, but Marcus understood it from their manner. In their talk that evening, Marcus did not desire to press his doctrines on them, but when the pastor began to use sarcasm in regard to some of the teachings of the Mormons, he put himself on the defense. Especially was the word "Saint" obnoxious to the reverend divine.

"My friend," asked Marcus, "what is a Saint?"

"A holy person; not sinful mortals as we."

"You have not read your Bible for that answer. In olden times every person who became a member of the Church of Christ was called a Saint. They were not all perfect men and women, but mortals like us."

They sat around the table cracking nuts, after the dinner. The parson's wife looked strangely at Marcus as he talked.

"We call ourselves Saints and the world calls it sacrilege. That is because they have changed the meaning of the word. In our pictures of Saints, we see some old-

monk or nun, with eyes turned up to heaven, and a long-drawn, unnatural expression on the face, and we are led to believe that a living flesh and blood mortal cannot be a Saint. I claim to be a better Saint now than a few years ago when I had somewhat of a ministerial look on my face."

Marcus laughed, but neither the parson nor his wife joined in his merriment.

"We are the children of God, and we are here for a purpose," continued Marcus. "The flesh is not an evil tenement to be despised, for by so doing we despise the noblest works of God. The highest type of personal holiness is not obtained in the cloister, but out in the thick of the world's temptations, battling with sin and error, gaining experience by what we suffer, overcoming, conquering. There is opportunity enough for self-denial and self-renunciation in our daily lives. A man can be a *man* and a *Saint* at the same time. Manhood, womanhood and sainthood are synonymous. Don't you think so?"

"You haven't forgotten how to preach yet," said his friend.

"Why, no; I'm a preacher, you know."

Out again in the wild night, Marcus realized that he was not dreaming, but that life was real enough. The snow came in thick gusts and he wrapped his coat closely around him as he went to his lodgings. His friend had not even asked him to stay over night, neither to call again and see them. Well, it was all right.

CHAPTER XIV.

One morning Marcus received a number of letters from the West. One was from Janet, one from John,

and some from his friends. One had come from Hungerton, and had traveled the long journey back again. The handwriting was not his mother's, and when he opened it, he knew the cause: his mother was dead now nearly two months ago.

It was sad news to Marcus, he had hoped to see her yet once more; but now she had gone to his father. She had borne the news of his son to him. Did they understand the truth there and rejoice that they had a son on earth who was an honor and not a disgrace to them now? Marcus believed they did.

Shortly after New Years Marcus set out on a long journey. He meant to reach Hungerton early in the spring, and even if he could do nothing in the way of preaching there, he wanted to see his mother's grave. Besides, there was a little property which he would have to dispose of.

Marcus walked from village to village and from farm to farm, preaching the Gospel, meeting with the usual ups and downs incident to missionary life. People had very little use for religion. The great question before the country was politics. The nation was in a turmoil. Congress was vainly trying to adjust the rights of "slave states" and "free states." Kansas was the scene of civil war. John Brown had made his raid on Harper's Ferry, had been captured and hanged. Forebodings of the coming conflict filled the air, and Marcus remembered the utterances of the Prophet Joseph on the subject.

As he neared Hungerton it seemed to Marcus that people became more indifferent to his religious teachings. Some threatened him with mob violence if he did not leave

the country; but as he did not stop long in one locality, they did not disturb him.

One day, when warm spring winds had begun to thaw the snow, Marcus trudged along the country road. It was extremely hard walking because where the snow was not one soft slush he sank over his shoe tops in mud. He had walked all forenoon and had failed thus far to get anything to eat. He had no money, so all the afternoon he called from house to house in hopes of getting Gospel talks and something to eat; but each succeeding house seemed more hostile than the one before. In the afternoon a storm came up and the rain fell in torrents.

Marcus' clothes were wet through, but on he trudged. Between the farmhouses the forest began to be dense, and when evening came on he found it difficult to keep the road.

Up to ten o'clock that night Marcus had asked at twenty-one places for lodging and each time had been refused. Now he resolved to ask no more, but walk on in the storm all night and get to Hungerton the next day. He would get something to eat and a place to rest there.

He walked slowly on. The mud and water ran in and out of his shoes. He took off his overcoat, as it was filled with water and was heavy. The trees overhead obscured the little light in the sky. The wind howled dismally. Such an utter loneliness Marcus had never felt. In other privations he had had human company, but here he was alone, and not a soul had kindness enough in his heart to take in from the storm a despised Mormon Elder. He was not far from his former home. No doubt many along the road would have known him had he given his name. Three years ago he could have driven

along the same road as the Reverend Marcus King, and would have been royally entertained at any of the homes; but now—well, such is the way of the world. He did not expect any better treatment; but, ugh, how the streams of water ran down his back!

He walked on, and the rain still fell. He passed one or two farm houses, but they were dark and foreboding. He would travel on. Though he was faint and weak, he would be refused no more that night. The mud clung to his feet like great balls. The trees brushed him with their great wet arms.

He was following along a pole fence when he came to a clearing. A small house stood close to the road, and from a window a shaft of light shot out into the darkness. As he came opposite the door he heard voices. He would ask for a drink of water. As he knocked on the door, the talking within ceased, and a man opened it. Marcus did not go in, dripping wet as he was.

"Will you kindly give me a drink of water?" he said.

"Come in, come in, sir; come in out of the storm," said the man.

"I am dripping wet."

"That's nothing; you can't spoil our carpet." The floor was of cleanly scrubbed pine boards.

Marcus stepped in, and a young girl gave him a glass of water. A large open fireplace was nearly filled with a burning log. The room was so cozy, but Marcus turned to go again.

"Its rather bad weather for traveling," said the man, "and you're out late tonight. Walking too?"

"Yes," said Marcus.

The wife now arose, and looked at her husband. She

had been looking intently at Marcus all the time. The man understood.

"Are you in a hurry?" he asked.

"No; but I have no place to stop for the night, so I must be on the move."

"Who are you?"

"I am a Mormon Elder, preaching the Gospel without purse or scrip. I have asked for shelter and food twenty-one times during the day, and have been refused each time. I shall ask no more," and he moved towards the door.

"But, great God, man, if you want to stay here, you're welcome. I don't care what you are. You're cold and wet and hungry, and that's enough. Come up to the fire. Wife, get him something to eat."

The wife did not obey instantly, but she came up to Marcus to take his dripping hat and coat. She peered into his face and said:

"Are you Marcus King?"

"I am. That is my name."

"Why, Henry!" she exclaimed, "this is Marcus King, your old pastor at Hungerton."

The man came up also and took Marcus' hand. He looked closely into the bearded face.

"Are you the preacher from Hungerton?"

"No, Henry," interposed the woman, "you know he left Hungerton, left the pulpit and the church, and joined the Mormons."

Henry Sanford raised one hand to his eyes as if he would clear them of some mist. Then he knew him, and Marcus too recognized his friend whom he had last seen in Hungerton jail, a religious madman.

"I am pleased to meet you, friend Sanford," said Marcus. "I am glad that you are looking so well, you and your family."

"Yes; I am well now, and am rid of mind-destroying religion, which nearly sent me to the asylum. Religion is the greatest curse on earth. Perhaps I should not say that, as you are a preacher. But I can prove it. The twenty-one people who refused you shelter and food are all long-faced Christians. I—I am an unbeliever, an infidel —mother, what are we doing? Can't you see he is nearly starved. I'll get some dry clothes for you, sir; and you'll stay over night with us. This weather is not fit for a dog to travel in."

In a very few minutes Marcus had on dry clothing, and was sitting by the fire eating supper. The children stood around in silence. The father began to talk about the coming presidential election, while the mother urged him to eat; but the hour was late, and soon all retired for the night.

Marcus stayed with them all the next day. Mrs. Sanford told him their story, how that Henry had gradually regained his mind, and how that he had turned rank infidel. But it was a thousand times better than the way he was before, she said. He was kind to her and the children, and they all lived happily on the farm far away from churches or preachers. Then she told him what news she knew about Hungerton. He also had long talks with Henry, handling him wisely. He was deeply interested in politics, and from that subject Marcus led to science and at last to religion. Henry listened attentively.

"Is that Mormonism?" he asked.

"Yes."

"Well, there's some *sense* to that. Why didn't you preach like that when you were in Hungerton?"

"I could not give what I did not have. Now I have, and am sent to give."

"You hold meetings?"

"Whenever I get a chance."

"Will you preach in our schoolhouse tomorrow?"

"With pleasure."

"All right, I'll see to it."

And he did. The next day the news was spread, and early in the afternoon Henry Sanford drove with his whole family to the schoolhouse. Some said that he had "got religious" again, and that the neighbors had better look out for one of his crazy spells; but Henry was all right, and knew what he was doing.

The "religion" which Henry Sanford "got" at the meeting in the schoolhouse did not in any way disturb his mental equilibrium. Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, repentance from sin, baptism for the remission of sin, the gift of the Holy Ghost—these were plain, simple truths substantiated by holy writ. The room was fairly well filled with people from the neighboring farms, and Marcus spoke with power to them. A few had known him when he was a preacher in Hungerton, and wondered at his joining the Mormons. "Such a young man!" said one. "Such a fine looking man!" said another. "Such a good talker!" said a third.

Marcus was not disturbed until towards the close of the meeting. Then a man in a farther corner began asking questions. Marcus answered them, but the man was not satisfied. Marcus asked his hearers to let him finish his talk, and then he would answer any question;

but it was evident that the plan was to break up the meeting. The questioner would not sit down. Others began to talk out loud, and it seemed as though the meeting would end in an uproar.

Just then Henry Sanford arose. He was sitting near the front, and he faced the crowd.

"Ladies and gentlemen," said he in ringing words, "I hope we are peaceable citizens and will give this gentleman a respectful hearing. He will answer your questions after he gets through. Can there be anything fairer than that?"

"His doctrines are deceitful," shouted someone.

"You will have a chance to prove that after awhile, Mr. Simpson," replied Henry. "I don't make many pretensions myself, but I believe in the golden rule—the the rule, Mr. Simpson, that I have heard you expound more than once. Now you have a chance to practice what you preach. Sit down, Mr. Simpson, and don't disturb the meeting."

As Henry was the justice of the peace. he spoke with authority. The noise subsided, and the meeting went on. At its close no questions were asked, but Mr. Simpson and his followers got away as quickly as possible.

Marcus went back with his friends, and spent the night. During the evening some neighbors called in and they had a pleasant time. Next morning Marcus went on his journey. Henry would have taken him to Hungerton in his wagon, but Marcus said he preferred to walk. The distance was short, and there were many places on the way where he desired to call.

The rain had ceased. The few remaining clouds were dissolving in the western sky, and the sun shone bright

and warm. The roads were quite firm under foot. The trees were dry. The air was clear and cool, and full of the coming spring.

All forenoon Marcus walked along the road, calling at the few farmhouses. As he neared Hungerton the country became familiar to him. At noon he ate his lunch on the bank of a creek, which had been a favorite playground when a boy. Here he had often fished, and in the woods surrounding he had laid snares for the squirrels. The creek was now swollen with the rain and rushed down its bed in a brown torrent. Every hill and dale and stream now recalled memories of the past. Marcus lived again as a boy as he sauntered leisurely past the dear familiar scenes of bygone years.

In the afternoon he reached the "top," so called because from its summit the whole valley wherein Hungerton lay could be seen. The road skirted this knoll, and often had Marcus climbed the few rods up to its bare rounded surface, even as he now did. Here he got the first view of the broad, still-flowing river, within whose bended arm the town of Hungerton snugly rested. The same rude seat which had been erected on the "top" was there yet; and as Marcus rested on its weather beaten boards, he discerned the initials which he and his boy companions had carved on the back. It seemed so long ago, at the same time but yesterday. Where now were the boys? What had been their lot? Where had they roamed, and where settled? How many of those yet in the town before him would recognize the browned, bearded man as their former playmate? What schemes they all had planned! Yes, seated on that same hill top, with the same beautiful panorama before them, they had

mapped out their lives, as seemed grandest and best to their boyish imaginations. There was Joe, big, strong Joe. He was to be a merchant and marry sunny-haired Josie; but Joe turned student and became a college professor, and didn't marry Josie. Then Jim, the fastest runner in the crowd, whose whole aim in life was to learn to pitch a curved ball—he went to school with Marcus, and became a preacher too. Then there was Tom, tow-headed, freckled-faced Tom, who took all the bantering the boys and girls gave him in such a quiet, good-humored way. The last heard of him was that he was on his way to the gold fields of California. Then Fred, who crushed his leg in the woods and ever after walked with a crutch. He, instead of Joe, became the merchant and married sunny-haired Josie. There was little Sammy, who couldn't climb the hill without getting out of breath. He alone had not wandered, as the little white cross in the graveyard showed. Then there was Marcus, whose father was the minister, who was supposed to set the other boys a good example. What had become of him? Ah; he had become the black sheep of the lot, he had disgraced the community, had deserted his church and his charge, and, worst of all, had become a Mormon.

Marcus sat until the sun sank low in the west. The river burned with burnished gold. The breeze tossed the swelled buds of the trees back and forth, as if rocking to sleep the impatient, waking children of the forest. Then the sun went down, and the gray shadows crept over the valley below, crept up the hill sides, crept up over the "top," and the whole earth was enwrapped in a soft twilight. Then the heart of the young man was full. There was nothing else for him to do but to sink on the earth

beside the seat and pour out to God the fullness of his bursting heart.

CHAPTER XV.

The gas had been lighted in the streets of Hungerton when Marcus entered. He meant first to find the lawyer who had charge of his small business affairs. He had no money, and he did not wish to ask for food and lodging without money to pay. So he walked up the main street, noting the changes in the town and the people. No one knew him, although he recognized many of his old-time friends. There was a peculiar feeling connected with it all. There he was, a total stranger in a town full of people who knew him. They crowded past him on the sidewalk, but knew him not. He must have changed much.

And there was the church. He saw its outlines in the dark, and there were lights within. Yes; there were the iron fence and gate. The same lamp-post stood near it. The trees seemed larger, but the church smaller. He walked by. People were entering. A block up the street was the lawyer's home. He would call there, as he would not likely be at the office.

Marcus rang the bell, and the girl that answered him said that Mr. Brown, the lawyer, was out of town, but would be back tomorrow. So until tomorrow Marcus would have to wait. He went down the street again. People were still going into the church. Some carriages drove up and their occupants alighted at the gate. There must be some special services, or else the people had awakened to the importance of the week-day meeting. Marcus

might as well join the crowd and get a look at the old church. He went in and found a seat at the rear near the door. The church was nearly full. The lights shone brightly, and the many flowers in front filled the room with their perfume. Being early for flowers, Marcus wondered at the extravagance. The usher was unknown to Marcus, so he was allowed to sit unobserved.

For a moment Marcus felt out of place down by the door. He saw that the pulpit had been re-painted and upholstered; otherwise it was the same church. The walls were getting dingy, and some of the seats showed signs of wear. It certainly was getting too small for such a crowd of people.

And now the organist who had done faithful service for both Marcus and his father went to the organ, and the familiar notes echoed into the ears of Marcus King. They brought him back again to days gone by when he himself gave out the hymn and preached the sermon. The pastor now came in from the back door. He was a middle-aged man with a cleanly shaven face So that was his successor in office, thought Marcus. Well, he certainly looked pious enough to suit the most orthodox. The pastor did not proceed with the services, but arranged the flowers as if he was waiting for something. Then Marcus learned from the whispering around him that he was about to witness a marriage ceremony. He was somewhat disappointed, as he had expected to hear the new pastor.

More carriages drive up, and there is a bustle outside. The people turn and look towards the door and whisper, "There they come." The party come up the walk and into the vestibule where there is some delay. Then they enter. Marcus does not turn around, but first

catches sight of them as they walk up the aisle. The man is tall and broad-shouldered; the girl's slim, graceful figure is clothed in white. "The best men" and bridesmaids follow, and Marcus distinguishes among them some of his acquaintances. The parson meets the company in front of the pulpit, and is arranging them into their proper places for the ceremony.

Marcus is now interested. He had not married many couples himself, but he remembered one old pair of fifty and sixty, and how odd it was for him, a young unmarried man, to bind together such old people. But now the group is arranged, and the young people to be married step to the front. The gas lamps shine directly on them, and Marcus sees, apparently looking directly at him, the pale beautiful face of *Alice Merton!*

For an instant the whole scene is a blur on his vision; then from it comes but one sharp outline, the figure of Alice. She stands there, young and fair and more beautiful than ever. She folds her hands in front where they hang listlessly down, as if she were a victim waiting resignedly for the sacrifice. Her face is white.

The awful truth bursts upon Marcus as with a mighty flood. There is Alice, *his* Alice, to be married, to be bound for life to the man at her side. The thought is unbearable. Marcus presses hard the back of the chair in front of him. Yet there they stand. The parson is slow in beginning.

During that brief space of time Marcus lived over again his life with Alice Merton. (Afterwards he thought of the wonder of it all, how that every detail of years could be crowded into a panorama to be flashed before his mind in an instant). Then as a climax came again the

last scene between them. But what could he do? He was helpless. She would have to go. She would have to be another's, and not his wife.

The minister steps up to the pair, the woman on the left, and the man on the right. Then to the hushed spectators he begins to speak, quoting from the printed formula used on such occasions:—

"Dearly beloved, we are gathered together here in the sight of God, and in the face of this company, to join together this man and this woman in holy matrimony; which is commended of St. Paul to be honorable among men: and therefore is not by any to be entered into unadvisedly or lightly; but reverently, discreetly, advisedly, soberly, and in the fear of God. Into this holy estate these two persons present come now to be joined. If any man can show just cause why they may not lawfully be joined together, *let him now speak*, or else hereafter forever hold his peace."

"*Darling, darling, you are mine, my very own for time and for eternity*" rang in Marcus' ears louder than the words of the minister. Those words were inspired and could not fall to the ground unfulfilled.

Marcus arose and stepped out in the aisle.

"Alice, Alice Merton, I object to your marrying that man." he said.

He stood still and erect amid the deathlike silence. Most of them knew him then by the familiar voice, and they were awed by the scene. The parson had never been interrupted like that before, and was visibly uncertain what to do. The bridegroom turned to him and bade him go on with the ceremony. Then Marcus spoke again in tones not loud but penetrating:

"I am Marcus King. Alice, do not marry that man. You are mine, mine, Alice, by the eternal laws of God."

An audible oath escaped from the lips of the would-be bridegroom. Murmurs ran through the church, then there was silence again as Alice raised her hands to her head. She took a step or two forward as if she would walk down the aisle, and then fell to the floor.

In the confusion which followed Marcus stepped back to the door, and stood there looking on. Those that passed out glared at him, as they would at a venomous reptile. He saw that Alice was lifted up and carried to the platform, and when she again regained consciousness he heard her whisper:

"Take me home."

Then he went out and up the street.

For the second time Marcus King had made a great sensation in his native town. By the next day the news was the talk of the town. Opinions were various. Some claimed that he did right in rescuing Alice Merton from the hands of an adventurer. Some said that the Mormon should have been tarred and feathered and driven from the country. Others shook their heads and didn't know. A few had seen Marcus' weather-stained coat, but more had observed his majestic bearing as he had stood in the aisle protesting against the marriage.

Marcus himself had gone that evening direct to a hotel and ordered supper and a bed.

During the night he slept fairly well, and next morning managed to reach Mr. Brown's office without a stir on the street. The business that could be attended to that morning being soon finished, Marcus went back to the

hotel where he spent the day reading and writing letters. Here he heard the gossip and gleaned from it that Alice had been taken home. The marriage had been indefinitely postponed. In fact, the would-be bridegroom had somewhat brusquely demanded that the ceremony should go on, and had quarreled with Alice's old father. Then he had left, no one knew where, and it was believed by many that he was afraid of Marcus, that Marcus knew something more of him than anyone else in Hungerton. When Marcus was approached on the matter and when he denied any previous knowledge of the man, plainly he was not believed.

But what move to make next was not clear to Elder King. He would have to stay a few days in the town, but what to do about Alice he knew not. He did not repent of what he had done in the church, for many said that the man she was about to marry was an adventurer; besides, he had other and personal reasons. But what good would come of it, anyway? He longed to boldly call on Alice. She must be very ill, by what he heard; and he could believe that from the face he saw in the church. Marcus had concluded that he must see Alice before he left Hungerton for good, but for that opening he could only wait.

All the day he moved about no more than was necessary; not that he was afraid of anybody, but he considered it wisdom to be quiet. A few friends called on him, with whom he talked pleasantly, and told of the new country in the valleys of the West. That evening he visited some relatives of John and Eliza Dixon, and got home late. The next day he was busy with Lawyer Brown until in the afternoon.

Looking out of the window of his room, he saw Mr. Merton drive up to the hotel in the old familiar buggy. He got out, fastened his horse, and came in. Presently, there came a knock on the door and a boy told him that he was wanted.

"Is it Mr. Merton?" asked Marcus.

"Yes, sir."

"Then show him up."

Mr. Merton had aged very much. Marcus could see that his hair was white and that his hands trembled as he met him in the hall and led him into his room. The old man was not angry, but shook the hand that Marcus offered him in a mild, unconcerned way. Then he took the proffered chair and sat and looked at Marcus for some time.

"May I ask you how Alice is?" said Marcus.

"She is ill, very ill, sir."

Still he looked at the young man in that strange way.

"I sincerely hope, Mr. Merton, that I was not the cause of this illness—perhaps I should not have been so rash—but you know—"

"Yes; I know. Don't worry over that, young man. Alice was ill all the time, and should not have tried—but he forced it. I might as well tell you the truth, and that is that you did a good deed in stopping the marriage. I, Marcus"—and as the old man pronounced the word, his tone became softer—"never encouraged Alice in casting you off, when you joined the Mormons. She did it on her own responsibility. Are you still a Mormon?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, it's all right, I guess. Everybody to their

notion about such things, though I must say that I think it would have been much more comfortable if you had remained with us. And now, what I came for is this: Alice wants to see you. Will you come?"

Marcus' heart gave one great leap for joy.

"It will be the greatest pleasure of my life," said Marcus, "to once more look upon her face."

"Then you love her yet?"

"I have never ceased to love her."

"And she loves you, too," the old man murmured as they walked into the hall.

In a few minutes Marcus and Mr. Merton were driving from the city out into a country road which followed the broad river. Very few words were spoken. Soon they came in sight of the gray farm house back towards the hills, up to which they drove. Marcus knew the place well and remembered its beauty in the summer when the trees nearly hid it from view; but now it had grown gray and weather-stained, corresponding to the sombre woods around it.

Marcus alighted at the side door and was met by the mother. She took his hand and welcomed him, but there was a coldness about her. She took his hat and gave him a chair.

"Alice wants to see you," she said. "If you will excuse me for a few moments I will see if she is awake."

During her absence, Mr. Merton came in. While he was hanging his coat in the hall, he motioned to Marcus.

"You must excuse mother," he said, "if she treats you coldly. She doesn't understand. She believes in Mr. Carlton yet, and blames you. She has had great influence over Alice, and nearly forced her into the marriage, and

it is only for Alice's sake that she will have you come. You understand, Marcus?"

"I can appreciate her feelings, I think," was the answer. "I do not blame her."

They went in again, and soon the mother came back. Alice was awake, and feeling strong enough to see Marcus, so he was shown into her room. The mother went out and closed the door, leaving the two alone. Alice had asked her to do that.

The afternoon sun shone bright and warm, and the blinds of the large west window were drawn. A ray, however, came through at the side, and now fell across the bed where Alice lay propped up on the white pillows. When she saw him, she said "Marcus!" and held out her arms. He walked softly up to the bed, bent over her, and the white arms encircled his neck. She drew his head down beside hers and held it fast while she whispered:

"Forgive me, Marcus, forgive me!"

But all he could say was "Darling, oh, my darling!"

There are times when many words are weak, meaningless things, and that time had come in the life of Marcus and Alice. Language may communicate thought, but that was not what was wanted now. The feelings of two souls had accumulated, and had been pent up for a long time. The natural channel between two hearts had been clogged. But now every obstacle was removed, and freely the current of love flowed between them. The emotions are best indicated by a look, a motion, a pressure of the hand. Words are useless. Silence is the most eloquent.

Then the arms relaxed and fell down on the coverlet,

and as Marcus sat by the bedside he took the thin hands in his and held them gently. The big blue eyes filled with tears, yet she smiled through them.

"You have forgiven me," she said, "and I thank you, Marcus."

Then she closed her eyes as if to sleep, and he smoothed back the hair from her forehead.

"It's been too much for you. You are tired. I shall go now that you may sleep."

"I am tired, and I believe I could sleep if you will stay. Marcus you must not go away any more, you must stay until—"

"Yes, I will not leave you untill you are well—but don't talk any more. There, now, you must rest."

He kissed her closed eyes and softly left the room. The father was walking back and forth on the floor; the mother sat by the table with her face in her hands.

"I think Alice will sleep now," said Marcus."

The father gave a sigh of relief. "She has hardly slept for two nights," he said.

The mother also felt better, and was more cheerful as she walked back and forth from the supper table to the door of the sick room, and seemed to feel more kindly towards Marcus. After supper Alice awoke much refreshed. The lamp was lighted and the three went in. Alice spoke to them in a cheerful way. Then the doctor came. The father and Marcus went with him outside to hear his opinion. He shook his head.

"But she is better, isn't she?" asked the father.

"She seems so,this evening; but it is only temporary. The girl has no vitality. She is all run down. This has

been with her for a long time. The attempted marriage only brought the inevitable a little sooner."

"Is it that serious, doctor?" asked Marcus somewhat alarmed.

"I am telling you the truth. I do not care to conceal the facts from you. There are very small chances of her recovery. She may linger for some time or she may go rapidly."

Mrs. Merton asked Marcus for Alice's sake to remain at the farm house. If he was not busy, they would consider it a favor; and Marcus said he would stay as long as he could be of any use.

The doctor's words could not be doubted. The next day Alice was weak, weaker than usual; and although she did not talk much, there was a smile upon her face. Marcus sat by the bedside and she seemed content when her hand lay in his. The mother saw, and now understood, and left them alone much of the time.

Spring days came on in rapid succession. The sun was bright, the winds were warm, and all nature stirred in its efforts to awake from its wintry sleep. The grass on the sunny sides of walls and ridges began to be green. The buds of trees swelled ready to bursting. The bees came from the hive and buzzed around the windows. The air was filled with fresh spring odors.

And as everything without slowly awoke to life, so one within gently sank into death. The spring days went calmly by, and Marcus was yet at the farm house.

It was one of those still afternoons when the world seemed taking a much needed rest that Marcus was sitting in his usual place by Alice. They were alone. The few sounds from the adjoining rooms were low; the loud-

est seemed to come from the little round clock on the mantel.

"Marcus, bless me again. I want you to talk more to me."

Marcus took from his pocket a vial of oil, anointed her with a few drops, and then, placing his hands on her head, blessed her.

"Now I feel stronger," she said. "Tell me more about Joseph Smith and what he did—and the angels and all those wonderful things."

And he talked, quietly and in soft tones, and told her the whole beautiful story.

"And out there in Utah," she continued, "you said it was a wild country. Tell me about it."

So he told her of the mountains and the valleys, the streams and the Great Salt Lake.

"Marcus, that friend of yours—Janet. Have you her picture?"

"I think I have a small tintype."

"Will you let me see it?"

From a packet of letters he drew out the picture and handed it to her. She looked at it for some time.

It is a good, sweet face; and you like her, don't you, Marcus?"

"She is a good girl."

"Yes; much better than I—sh, don't contradict me. I know. I know a lot now. When I am gone, you will go back to Utah and marry her."

"My dear Alice—"

"Yes; I want you to. It's all right. Bring me that little box on the dresser."

Marcus brought it.

"The key is hanging on the wall; yes; that's it."

She unlocked the small rosewood box and from it took a letter which she handed to him.

"That letter is from Janet. It is the most wonderful I have ever received. I did not know a girl could write such a letter and mean it. Did she mean it, Marcus?"

"Janet would deceive no one; but of course I don't know what she said."

"Read it."

Marcus read the letter, and Alice watched his face.

"I think she means every word," he said.

"What does she mean by marriage for time and eternity?"

He explained.

Then she closed her eyes, and held the tintype to her cheek. The mother looked in but did not enter.

Alice reached for his hand, and she held it close.

"Marcus, Marcus, oh, I am so glad! Such light, such blessed light! I can die in peace."

Then she fumbled in the box again and found a ring

"Do you remember it, Marcus? You gave it to me. Now I want you to give it to Janet *with my love and blessing.*"

Marcus took it, but his heart was too full for words. The clock ticked on. A breeze pushed the branches against the window panes. The tintype dropped from the pale fingers, and Alice slept again.

Marcus stayed with her to the last. The grass and the trees were green and the first spring flowers were out when she died. Marcus prevailed on the father and mother to let her be buried in his own lot, close beside his mother. The old parents now seemed to cling to Mar-

cus as to a son, and it was a sad day when he bade them farewell. While at Hungerton Marcus received a call to another field, and he at once made preparations for the journey. He held no public meetings in his native town. The Lord would excuse him for that, he thought; but before he left he had the rude crosses taken from his parents' graves and three neatly finished marble stones placed within the new iron railing around his lot. One of them stood by a newly made grave, and on it was inscribed, besides the name and dates:

There is no death! What seems so is transition.
This life of mortal breath
Is but a suburb of the life elysian,
Whose portal we call death.

CHAPTER XVI.

It was one of those sublime winter evenings only seen in the clear atmosphere of the high western regions. The whole earth was white below, and the sky above was deep blue, set with innumerable twinkling diamond points. To the west the plain stretched like a vast sheet of purest white. To the east the mountains arose buried under their ermine covering. Every rocky crag, each deep hollow, was decked and filled with snow until the otherwise rough surface was shining smooth.

The well-trodden snow creaked under their feet as Marcus and Janet walked arm in arm down the principal street of Hemla.

"What is this business of so much importance?" asked he.

"Well, they didn't tell me, of course," she answered. "All I was to do was to bring you there and ask no questions."

"Strange, they couldn't manage for another day without getting after a fellow the day he gets home—I wanted to spend the evening with you, Janet."

"Well," she laughed, as she clung the closer to his arm, "am I not with you?"

"Yes, but—halloa, what's this? Who's living in my house?"

"Let's go in and see."

They paused in front of the house Marcus had left unfinished. He saw that it was now completed. A bright light gleamed from the windows, and the smoke curled from the chimney. Janet led down the path and knocked on the door. When it was opened, there was a room full of people.

"Brothers and sisters," said Janet, "let me introduce you to the Bishop of Hemla."

Then what a scene there was! The crowd filled two large rooms, and around he must go and shake every one by the hand. Then there were welcomes and questions and words of jolly banter, until Marcus was fairly carried away by it all. When he had made the rounds, Janet was again at his side. The older members of the company each took a candle and marched two by two into the third room. In the center was a long table spread with food. As they filed in and seated themselves on the benches on each side, the candles were placed in wooden blocks with holes in. Marcus and Janet sat at the head of the table. A blessing was asked, and then one of Marcus' counselors

made a speech of welcome, to which Marcus replied in a few words.

Then the eating began, and right merrily it went on for a time. Suddenly, in the midst of the confusion, somebody pounded on the table for order, and Brother Wood arose.

"I want to speak in this meetin'," he began, "'cause Brother Johnson didn't tell it all. I reckon Brother King ought'er know why we have took such liberties with his house, an' I want ter tell him." ["*That's right. Go ahead*".]

"Well, yer see, when a man's on a mission his affairs at home kinder stop, an' when he gits back, he has to begin all over again. I've seen it lots o' times." ["*Hear, hear! So have I.*"]

"So, thinks I, Brother King'll need a house when he comes home to put his wife in, 'cause then o' course he'll take fur good Brother Brigham's advice. [*Loud applause.*] Well, an' right now I must make a confession. All you folks thought I had orders from Brother King to go ahead with the house, but I didn't; I done it on my own hook. ["*Oh, oh.*"] Yes, I could see that the Bishop didn't know nothin' about buildin' log houses, an' that the way he was doin' it would spile a lot o' good logs, so while all his beautiful plans and drawin's on paper was locked up in his box, I went to work an' finished this house 'cording to my notion." [*Tremendous applause and laughter.*]

"An' folks," with a wave of his hand, "I tell ye, with the 'ception of the meetin'house, it's the finest in the town. It has all the latest improvements an'—"

His speech, which was the longest he had ever been known to make, was interrupted by a burst of song from the other rooms, and Brother Wood had to sit down.

So the evening passed, and at its close Marcus again

thanked them all, and especially Brother Wood. Marcus and Janet stood by the door and shook each one by the hand as they went home. John and Eliza were the last.

"You folks go on home," said John to Marcus. "We'll see to the house."

Marcus wrapped Janet's cloak about her with a tender touch, and they walked home in the starlight.

The next afternoon it snowed. Marcus went over to Janet's. She was alone. The grate was full of a warm fire. The little room looked very much the same as it did three years ago. Janet must have expected company. She did not wear her working dress, and there was just a tiny wave in her hair.

"Janet," said Marcus, "I believe you have grown. You look taller."

You must be mistaken; but I have had fine health. Haven't been sick a day. Perhaps that accounts for it."

"You certainly look well; and Janet, you have grown *so* beautiful!"

"O shame, Marcus, to tell such stories!"

He sat down by the blazing hearth, placed a chair near him and motioned Janet to take it. Then they sat for some time looking into the fire.

"You got my letters that I wrote after leaving Hungerton?"

"Yes,"

"Would you like to see a picture of Alice?" He took it from his pocket and handed it to her.

"It agrees with my mental picture. I thought she looked like that."

Then they talked for some time about his experiences, and the affairs at home.

"Who was that man Alice was about to marry?" asked Janet.

"Didn't I tell you his name? Let me see. I've nearly forgotten it. Oh, yes, it was Carlton, George Carlton, I believe."

"Why, Marcus, that was the name of my—but no, it couldn't be the same man."

"He was a tall, broad-shouldered, black-haired man. I saw him only once—in the church."

"It must have been. I heard he had gone in the direction of Hungerton, but, but—how strange! The man to whom I was once engaged answered to the same name and description."

"That is strange. Could it have heen the same fellow?"

"But that's all in the past, and I don't like to talk about it," said she.

"Then we won't."

"Tell me more about Alice." She looked again at the photograph. He drew a ring from his pocket, took her hand, and tried it on her finger.

"Does it fit?" he asked.

"Exactly."

"That was Alice's ring."

"And do you want me to wear it?"

"Alice sent it to you. One of her last requests was that I give you the ring with her love and blessing."

"Thank you. Poor, dear Alice! I shall wear it always."

"She got your letter as I told you, and pondered long over it. She died with full faith in the Gospel and a fair

understanding of its principles. When we go to the Endowment House we must do her work for her."

"Yes, certainly. I have thought of the same."

Then the door softly opened and someone stole in and placed one hand over each of their eyes.

"Guess who it is."

"Mother," exclaimed both at once.

"Then don't sit the fire out," said Sister Harmon.

A bright, sunshiny, winter morning Marcus and Janet drove to town in the sleigh, and spent the day in the Endowment House. There were in reality two marriage ceremonies performed, and Marcus King got two wives in one day. True, one of those wives was in the spirit world; but the feeling that Alice was to be his was proved to be true. His prediction was fulfilled, and he was serenely happy in the thought. Janet Harmon's joy was also full, for had she not done a sister's part, and done it well!

And now, dear reader, if you have been patient with me thus far, I must tell you a secret—a secret that I have been tempted more than once to betray, but which, I think, I have kept pretty well until now—and that is that I, Marcus King, have personally written the pages of this little story. I began this writing with no other idea than to keep the narrative in the third person until the end, but as I progressed, I saw that if I did so one of the chief results to be attained by my story would not be realized.

Let me explain. Shortly after I joined the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints many of my former friends began to talk disparagingly of me. Some criticised

me severely, calling me a turn-coat, a deserter from my father's cause, and so forth. Some of my readers may remember how many of the leading religious papers of the East railed against me. At the time I paid no attention to it. Lately I received a clipping from an eastern paper purporting to be an account of my career. Who could have invented such stuff, I cannot conceive. At the same time I have received a number of letters inquiring about me. Seemingly, many people are interested in me and my doings, and it occurred to me to write out somewhat of my story and print it. Now if any of my eastern friends care a twenty-five cent piece to know the true state of affairs, I shall be pleased to mail each of them a copy of my book.

So much for preface, sandwiched in here at the wrong end.

But just a word to my unbelieving friends:

Someone has said that the glory of life is its fulness. I believe that. Had I remained with you in the world, I should no doubt have had a much easier time. I could have lived and died in Hungerton, respected by you all. I could have gone my daily rounds from my library to the church, wanting nothing to make life one smooth, pleasant journey—if God had not shown me the little pond in which I was playing, the frail boat in which I was sailing, and then the mighty, boundless ocean beyond the horizon of my limited vision. I say with that little "if," I could have been with you yet, but what would have entered into my life to develop it, to give it a rounded fulness! Dear friends, believe me, this life is a reality. It is meant to be something. We are here to do and not merely to say, to act and not merely to believe. To be good and true is not to draw a long face, to be religious is not to be

stupid; but I have already expressed myself on that point to one of your members, as I have recorded in a previous chapter.

Again, some of you have impugned my motives. My only answer to that is in my story,

And now, to all interested, (and I hope my story has been of interest to my brethren and sisters also) I am writing these last pages some years after the close of the events narrated in the first part of this chapter; and as I look back on those few intervening years I will tell you what I know of my (and I hope of our) friends who have figured thus far in my story.

First, I must tell you that I have built an addition to my house. It is of brick and a story and a half high. I write these lines by an open upper window, looking out westward toward the lake. It was a hard blow to Brother Wood to think that his house wasn't good enough for me, and I had to explain to him that a bishop needed much room to entertain all his visitors. We have no children yet, and I could not use the argument of a growing family. I shall not tear down the log house until Brother Wood dies.

I have corresponded regularly with Alice's parents, and whenever missionaries have visited them they have been kindly treated. It was just last month that I received news of their baptism. Old as they are, they would not wait longer, and now they are anxious to come to Utah; but I have told them not to attempt the journey yet. The railroad will soon be finished, and then they can come much easier. And so they are waiting.

Henry Sanford was the same staunch friend to the Elders, but did not join the Church. None gave them a

warmer welcome nor defended them more from persecution than he. When the war broke out, he joined the army, and in the long, hard struggle which has just closed he must have met his death. I have not heard from him since.

Certainly strange things happen. Last week I baptized Robert James. He now lives here in Hemla, and is one of the best workers in the ward. He wandered about the country for years, but he acknowledges to me that he could not escape from Mormonism. So he gave it up, humbled himself, and came back. He is very quiet and unassuming, but everybody knows that I am one of his converts. So they respect him, and he is now the happiest man in the settlement.

Mother Harmon died a year ago.

John Dixon is a prosperous farmer. His barns and granaries are growing. They need to; his family is in the same condition.

Hemla is prosperous. The people give the credit to the Bishop, but the Bishop gives it to his wife, and his wife to the Lord.

Just a word about the meetinghouse. The people finished it according to my plans, and even exceeded them in elegance. The trees are now quite large, and the ivy is creeping up the walls and over the roof. None can estimate the refining influence that house has had on our people, and especially the young portion. I can see a vast difference between our young folks and some I know in the neighboring settlements.

And that Mr. Carlton—

"Never mind that Mr. Carlton."

It was Janet. She had been looking over my shoul-

der, and if there is anything that bothers me, it is that. I might have been vexed with her, but she now leaned over so far that her cheek touched mine.

"Well, I'll not say anything about him, then," I said.

"No; don't."

"Then I guess I'd better write 'The End.'"

"No, not yet. I think you have to either make a change in a back page or an explanation now."

"What do you mean?"

Janet picked up a sheet of the manuscript and read: "'I, Marcus King, have personally written the pages of this history.'"

"That's wrong, because I wrote some of it," she said.

I stared at her, not knowing what she meant. Then she looked over my pile of papers and picked out some sheets of an earlier chapter from which she read that Marcus King was thought of as having "high ideals," "nobility of character," and so forth. I took the sheets from her, and there, sure enough, was her handwriting for a page or more; and she had connected the thought so nicely.

"Well," said I, "it would have been foolish of Marcus King to have said that about himself."

"But it is true," said my wife, "and with your explanation it may stand."

"I put the leaves back in their place. Janet came around, pushed the table away from me, and sat down on my knee.

"Look at that beautiful sunset," she said.

We do have grand sunsets at Hemla. I cannot con-

ceive of any finer even in Italian skies. There was a bank of heavy pearl-white clouds in the west, which formed themselves into great domes and high mountains with fathomless chasms between. Then the edges of the upper layers were tinged with pink which grew to a shining golden red. As the sun sank lower, and its rays got under the cloudland, mountains and domes turned into a brilliant burning red, and then it seemed that there was another world out in space being consumed with fire. The crimson sun dropped down behind the mountain,yet the sky was all ablaze.

"What do you think of it, Janet?"

"It is grand, it is grand! I think it is a faint reflection from the glory of God."

THE END.

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SEP 20
SEP 1
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MAY 1 1987
MAY 2
MAR 5 19
JAN 2 19
MAY 1
NOV 23 19
NOV 04 19
NOV 11 2002
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